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CONTENTS

	Page
COMMENTS	761
HOME DEFENCE	763
IF NOT—. By Kingsley Martin	764
A LONDON DIARY	765
THIS ENGLAND	766
THAT GERMANY. By H. N. Brailsford	766
THE NEW INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION. By Ritchie Calder	766
HOW TO BE BRILLIANT. By Y. Y.	767
COUNTRY NOTES. By V. Sackville-West	768
THE SUFFERINGS OF A SENTIMENTAL SPORTSMAN. By Michael Zoshchenko	769
HEINE'S WARNING TO FRANCE	770
DRAGON FLIES. By W. J. Turner	770
PLAYS AND PICTURES	771
CORRESPONDENCE	771
From J. M. Keynes; Wenzel Jaksch; L. Williamson; J. E. Walsh; Erasmus Herder; Caroline Haslett; Lord David Cecil; Margery South; H. M. Wodehouse and Others; Margaret Corke; E. R. Punshon; M. Bishop; E. V. Milner.	
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By V. S. Pritchett	774
REVIEWS:	Page
A Man of Steel. By Richard Coventry	774
New Novels. By John Mair	776
Being Alive. By Stephen Spender	777
Military Planning. By Tom Paine	778
A Guest at Lhasa. By Beryl de Zoete	779
GRAMOPHONE NOTES. By Edward Sackville West	779
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS	781
THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Cynicus	783

"IF NECESSARY ALONE"

SINCE Sunday night this country has been in the situation which Mr. Churchill foresaw in that powerful speech of a fortnight ago, ready "to fight on, if necessary for years, if necessary alone." What happened precisely during the continuous sessions of the French Cabinet throughout that day, we do not yet know. The rush of the German invasion was sweeping the French armies before it in headlong pursuit, over roads encumbered by millions of terrified refugees. At two points, near Saarbrücken and Colmar the Maginot Line had been broken and Verdun had fallen almost undefended. President Lebrun, a weak man at best, was for surrender, and so we must suppose were the "Two Hundred families" and the pacifist half of the Socialist party. By what constitutional fiction the change in direction came about is not clear. The Chamber could not meet, but the President may have consulted the heads of some of its more conservative groups. The decisive factor in the deliberations of M. Reynaud's all-party Government was Mr. Roosevelt's reply to his desperate last appeal. While it promised unlimited material aid, it had to answer that the choice between peace and war lay with Congress. This, with such diplomatic reports as they had before them, the Cabinet interpreted as a negation of their last hopes.

Mr. Churchill sought to stiffen their resolution by an offer that has no parallel in our history for its boldness and imaginative generosity. He proposed nothing less than a permanent Union between the Republic and this Kingdom. It should cover foreign policy, defence, finance and economics, and citizenship of the two countries should be a common right. A joint War Cabinet should govern both, and the losses of devastation should be borne in common. Here at last is the idea which gives to our struggle for European freedom a dynamic meaning. Continental unity must come out of this war. Shall it be on this basis of federal democracy or must it be the hegemony of a German master-race over herds of helots? What Mr. Churchill by this brilliant inspiration offered to the French will presumably be open, *mutatis mutandis*, to our other allies. It made apparently no very favourable impression on politicians of the French Right, who professed to see in it merely a scheme for annexing the French colonies to the British Empire. It never reached the French public, for the French wireless suppressed it.

By what means M. Reynaud's cabinet was broken up we do not yet know. He himself, so we learn, is now under restraint and one, at least, of his colleagues was for a time in prison. In his place the President nominated the octogenarian Marshal Pétain, the defender of Verdun, who belongs in politics to the ultra-conservative and clericalist Right. With him are General Weygand and Admiral Darlan, some other soldiers, and certain obscure politicians, chiefly of the Right. Messrs. Laval, Bonnet, Flandin, Paul-Boncour and Paul Faure, who were in the first published list of ministers, afterwards dropped out. It is clear that this Ministry represents neither the workers nor the masses under arms.

Marshal Pétain, using the Spanish Ambassador as his channel of communication with Hitler, and the Papal Nuncio as his messenger to Mussolini, then made his offer of surrender. The Germans, however, had granted no armistice and their armies swept on. They crossed the Loire at Orleans, occupied Metz, Dijon and the great arsenal at Creusot, while on the Alpine front they threatened the northern flank of the defence against Italy and in the West swept up to the ports of Nantes and Cherbourg. M. Baudouin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in repeated broadcasts undid some of the mischief, and in some degree the weary troops resumed resistance, for he declared that France would not accept a dishonourable peace. But her armies are disorganised; she has no munition industry left, and the new B.E.F. which had just taken its place in the line, was, of course, withdrawn. The French plenipotentiaries are now awaiting the terms of capitulation which Hitler will dictate to them. He will not hurry: following the precedent set by Foch, he will make sure that his troops have broken down the last ditch in which French patriotism might rally.

To this country the news of a disaster that dwarfs the long and unbroken series of our earlier misfortunes was received without bitterness. The French have fought gallantly against crushing odds, and they have been overwhelmed scarcely less by their six million refugees than by the German invaders. They are paying

for the mistakes of both French and British leadership. Already the reaction against this surrender by the usurping parties of property has begun, and it may go far. General de Gaulle, who was M. Reynaud's right-hand man, is organising a movement of resistance from London. There is good reason to hope that the greater part of the French fleet will continue to resist in concert with our own. General Noguès, who commands in North Africa, is prepared to hold it and fight on, and so is General Mittelhauser, who commands the army in Syria. Part of the French air force has flown to British airports and British ships are embarking some of the younger men who mean to continue their resistance, as well as the leaders of the Left, who have now to fear both German vengeance and the hostility of the clique now in power. We should judge that the government of capitulation can hold France only with Nazi bayonets. The Fifth Column cannot stand alone. The alliance, for long implicit, between the extreme French Right and the Fascist Dictatorships has been consummated at last, but under conditions that will expose the men of property to the execration of the masses. We do not underrate the consequences to ourselves. Hitler will use against us all the ports and aerodromes of France, her coalfields, her industry, and as much of her gold reserve and her stocks of oil and munitions as her troops have failed to remove or destroy. But our dangers seem tolerable when we compare them with the suffering and humiliation that have fallen on this happy and beautiful land and the eclipse that overshadows the most sensitive civilisation of our Continent. One resolve unites us all, to make of our island fortress the base from which the liberty of the French shall be restored. Our allies of yesterday are our fellow-citizens of to-morrow.

The War in America

The entire American continent has been feeling this week the repercussions of the shattering events in Europe. In the United States the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Stark, is demanding immediate measures to increase naval strength by 70 per cent.—a much larger increase than was contemplated in the Bill introduced only a week or so ago. President Roosevelt announces a plan of universal compulsory service, including both sexes and covering both military and civilian branches of national service. The American Government also states that it will recognise no transfers of territory on the American continent between non-American Powers—a statement which has to be taken in conjunction with the announcement that Canada is standing ready to take over the protection of the American possessions of the French Empire. From Uruguay come disclosures of a Nazi military plot designed to secure possession of the country; and there are plentiful rumours of similar movements in other States of South and Central America. Even more important, in an immediate sense, is the announcement that Mr. Roosevelt is proposing to establish a Pan-American Corporation, to be financed chiefly by the United States, for the disposal of the surplus produce of the American countries. This problem is urgent because of the past dependence of Latin America on trade with Germany and Italy, which is now cut off completely; but it may also serve as an important means of extending British credit throughout the American countries. A further important development is the freezing by the American Government of French credits in the United States. It will obviously make a great deal of difference whether these credits can now be made available for paying for the supplies ordered under the joint authority of the French and British Governments through their joint purchasing commission in the United States.

As against these events, there has to be set the continued uncertainty about the American political situation. The latest utterances of Mr. Landon seem to show that official Republicanism is still disposed to make capital out of assertions that Mr. Roosevelt is dragging the country into war; and even in face of the events of the past week it will take time for the American people—especially in view of the opposition of the industrial unions—to realise how near to their doors the war has come already. The President's candidature for a third term now seems certain, and his election highly probable; but in order to make sure of election he will, perhaps, have still to walk warily for much longer than we in this country can contemplate with any comfort. It is, however, something that deliveries of aeroplanes from the United States have already been greatly speeded up, and that additional contracts are now being placed at a great rate—for example, with the Ford Works for the delivery of Rolls-Royce engines. The supplies ordered for France will now presumably be sent to us, and more of the obstacles in the way of rapid deliveries will be removed. Already planes are allowed to take off direct from the United States, instead of needing to be dragged over into Canada; and naval torpedo boats and submarine chasers are immediately being put at the disposal of the British. Meanwhile, the Canadian Government has taken powers to enforce universal service and mobilisation of resources similar to those embodied in our own recent Act, and Canadian troops are beginning to arrive here in substantial numbers.

Stalin Takes Precautions

To interpret the latest movements of the U.S.S.R. as inspired by solicitude for the western democracies is, of course, absurd. The occupation of the Baltic States and the new pressure on Scandinavia and Rumania are precautionary measures designed to protect Russia against the increased power of the Axis. Despite his non-aggression pact with Hitler, Stalin is fully aware that a victorious Germany would, after a very brief delay, continue its expansion. The only question would be whether he selected as his next victim the New World or the U.S.S.R.; and Stalin is not likely to let his policy be based upon the fantasies of wish-fulfilment. He may hope and even plan for the best: he is certainly preparing for the worst. If they conquered Europe, the Nazis would once again declare themselves "encircled"; and the question is whether the two great neutrals can co-operate more successfully in mutual defence than the European Powers. They have common interests in the Pacific and they also have a common interest in preventing the defeat of Great Britain, if this can be done without undue risk to themselves. Our position in relation to Russia and America is not unlike that of the Spanish Republic in relation to Britain and France. Sir Stafford Cripps' task is not unlike that of Señor Del Vayo at Geneva. Let us hope he finds a more resolute and intelligent response.

Retreat in the Far East

The Tientsin agreement, signed this week by Britain and Japan, is a concession to Japan which is likely to be followed by further demands. The agreement, which includes the transfer of the disputed Chinese silver and the recognition of Japan's currency within the Concession, also give Japan police rights in the Concession which amount to a recognition of Japanese occupation. Japan finds the European war convenient. Holland conquered, the Dutch East Indies are at present administered by the Dutch Government in London and Batavia. Rich in oil, rubber and tin, they are now guarded only by the United States navy. The French collapse now raises the question of French Indo-China. The Axis powers have already been told by their Japanese partner that she expects to be consulted with regard to the future of this area which since the fall of Canton has been one of China's main exits. The Japanese have repeatedly tried to bring pressure to bear on the French Government to refuse this indirect assistance to Chiang Kai-Shek. On Wednesday the new French Government obeyed the Fascist conquerors by giving Japan a firm assurance that the transport of petrol through Indo-China has been absolutely forbidden. A report from Tokyo suggests that Germany had informed Japan that in making her claims for the return of colonies taken from her at Versailles, she would not include those islands in the Pacific which had been placed under a Japanese mandate.

The Government and the People

From a Parliamentary Correspondent.—The Premier's speech was an excellent parliamentary performance, but, in spite of all the praise it received, I feel that it failed to seize a tremendous opportunity. The country had received the news of the French collapse with a dazed but quite unhysterical bewilderment. It was appalled, but also in its insular way it felt that the ring was now clear for the bout everyone had been waiting for, the heavyweight championship of Europe. No doubt many people felt a sense of pride and personal responsibility that at last the future of Europe depended on them. Mixed with this was a strong feeling of frustration and a considerable suspicion that if the job was left to the old gang, they would fall down on it, as Gamelin and Weygand had done. This was the feeling that a great statesman would have capitalised. He would have made us feel that

he too understood how miserably the old gang had failed, how it had frustrated the will of the people and excused its own deficiencies by helping Hitler to create the legend of his invincibility. He would have expressed his belief in the vast untapped resources of energy, intelligence and courage in the British people and shown how at this great hour they were going to be released. In brief, he would have announced the second stage of that democratic revolution which began last Whitsuntide but has in the following weeks been checked, and proclaimed the marching orders of the people's war. A few weeks ago Mr. Attlee announced vast new emergency powers, spoke of national control of the banks and the right of the Government to call on every citizen for his services. Since the announcement no dramatic use has been made of these powers, except to intern a few Fascists and bring some factories under national control. A great statesman last Tuesday would have answered the German ultimatum to a defeated French Government by a spectacular use of those powers sufficient to make all of us feel that we all were needed and that we all were equal in the emergency of war. Mr. Churchill did not do so.

I do not mean to suggest that he failed to rise to the occasion. He did, but his response was that of a traditionalist, not of a democratic revolutionary. In measured terms he assessed the strength of our Navy, Air Force and Army and of our industrial front. The only section of the people he forgot to mention, save in passing, was the vast majority of the population, those millions of men and women who, if the invasion came, would find themselves useless civilians, regarded by the military as a potential refugee menace. To them he allotted the role of spectators: they could be confident and proud, but the confidence and pride must be in the performance of others. The common people, which has been taught to spend its leisure watching football-matches and films, was now to have the privilege of a seat inside the ring during the Heavyweight Championship of Europe. Mr. Churchill probably did not mean that, but it was certainly the effect of his speech and I can see in the plans of the Government nothing to contradict this interpretation. It has overthrown the lazy, spiritually decrepit Baldwin, Ramsay MacDonald, Chamberlain tradition; it is still deeply reluctant to adopt the ideas and methods of a democratic leadership which really knows and respects the potentialities of a great people. Unlike Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Churchill is really prepared to fight the war, but he wants to use the same weapons which Mr. Chamberlain was scared to employ. Nothing else can explain his toleration of the War Office with its present personnel or his obstinate determination to regard everyone who wants a strengthening of the Cabinet as intent on "recriminations" and "inquests."

That may be a good parliamentary debating point, but it entirely neglects both the purpose and the integrity of the critics of the present Cabinet. Those critics are not wholly or indeed mainly Labour. Clement Davies, to name only one, was, I suppose, while party labels meant anything, a Liberal. But the real division of opinion now is not along party lines: it is between the people who are on the defensive against the Nazis and those who see that nothing but a democratic offensive can avert defeat; between the cautious Tory or Liberal or Socialist conservative and the adventurous Tory or Liberal or Socialist iconoclast; between the men who put their trust in well-tried procedure and traditions and those who see we must innovate boldly and trust the people more than we trust our ancient institutions, and the singularly unpleasant additions made to them in the last ten years. In this crisis the crusted Labour man may be as dangerous as the crusted Tory, or Civil Servant or Brass-hat. Mr. Chamberlain's critics are not merely party-politicians. They include soldiers back from Norway and Flanders, Civil Servants frustrated by ineffective superiors, factory, business and bank managers, Trade Union organisers and workers who want to see their plant working to capacity—and behind them the inarticulate millions who feel they could help if they were given a chance, and—more dangerously—that the reason why they cannot help is because an oligarchy, which has let them down and is utterly defeatist in outlook, refuses to clear out and leave the job to others. How much the traditional inhibitions persist you can see in two small instances. The L.D.V. are short of guns, but the gunsmiths' shops are full of them. The Government have power to requisition but have not done so. Again, the Government want to prevent aeroplane landings, but have left it to the land-owner or tenant in most cases to set up the obstacles. By conscripting the materials (posts, old cars, tramlines, etc.) and the labour, the job could be done in a week. Or, alternatively, it might threaten imprisonment to any tenant or landlord who had not finished the job in a week.

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HOME DEFENCE

THE Prime Minister expressed a vigorous confidence in the strength of our defence against invasion. The Germans could get round the Maginot Line; they will have to defy the British Navy and cross at least twenty-one miles of sea before they can begin their attack upon this island. It was, however, disappointing that Mr. Churchill seemed unwilling to modify in any way the War Office plans for the defence against invasion.

The French experience has taught us that in modern warfare there is no front line. Make a line ten miles deep, as General Weygand did on the Somme, and the result is absolute chaos when the enemy has broken through. The whole of Britain must be conceived as one single fortress. If we wish to talk of defence in depth, then the depth of the defence must be from the East Coast to the West, from John o' Groats to Land's End. This vast fortress must be organised to defeat invasion, and clearly it must be divided into more serviceable commands than the four which at present exist. We doubt whether even the twelve regions of the Civil Commissioners are small enough for the purpose. Each of these new compact commands should be placed under a single military authority, whose staff should include men at present civilians but with special qualifications, whether through their knowledge of the area or their special skill as engineers, architects, railway managers, and so on. Such men, especially if they have military experience from the last war, should not be wasted as privates in the Local Defence Volunteers or permitted to volunteer for the Regular Army. They should be picked now for responsible posts in local defence and given a full military status alongside the professional soldier. The guiding principle of home defence must be a unified control in each area, but a control not exclusively dominated by the professional soldier. The commanding officer should, of course, be a vigorous and experienced professional soldier. His staff and his other officers should be partly professional and partly drawn from responsible men in civilian life.

Under this area-military-command should fall the Air Raid Precautions, Auxiliary Fire Service, and other auxiliary services and above all the Local Defence Volunteers. At present, the Local Defence Volunteers are being organised under the County Territorial Associations, and in many areas are all too loosely associated with the military command. This is a disastrous division of authority whose ill-effects are increased by the fact that some Territorial Associations are bathed in a "county" atmosphere and dominated by the spare-time soldier who too often has joined the association not through an interest in military science, but for social reasons. The Local Defence Volunteers can do excellent work if they become one subordinate part of a single military command and this is equally true of the A.R.P. and other kindred services.

Sir Richard Acland and others have put forward the idea of a *levée en masse* and a people's war. They are anxious to arm as many civilians as possible and to give to the masses the feeling that they are participating in the defence of their homes. A sound instinct has inspired this plan, but we believe that, as put forward during the last week, it is in important respects ill-conceived. Hitler's success is largely due to the fact that he has given up the use in attack on vital points of the mass army and has relied on heavily mechanised and specially trained shock troops. Against such troops, and none other are likely to be sent to this country, a civilian army with hand-grenades might well degenerate into a mob of refugees. The day when a half-armed populace could defeat absolutism on the barricades is over. Against the Nazi army nothing but a highly organised and disciplined defence can be effective.

We believe that a more fruitful lesson can be learnt from the Boer *Commandos*. The Boer generals were faced with a problem not unlike our own. If they had called up the whole people, they would have starved: if they had left their farmers on the land they would have had no army. They therefore, in effect, mobilised their total manpower, but ordered them to remain at their civilian occupations unless they received instructions. The farmer might report for three weeks' or three months' duty, or even for four hours' duty a week. Against these orders there was no appeal. But he was only a soldier during his periods of service. The rest of the time he was a civilian and forbidden to take any part in war.

It should be possible to apply that system in this country. Let us examine one instance. A vital part of our defence will be the erection of road obstructions and the demolition of bridges. Such work could perfectly well be entrusted to gangs of miners, quarrymen or builders' operatives or council roadmen and mechanics, provided they are

trained for the purpose. In each area a certain number could be seconded either for a day or for a week or a longer period, trained and kept in readiness for the emergency. Working on a rota all the men in that area could receive their training while the necessary civilian work was still being maintained. Such a scheme for part-time soldiering would avoid the danger, to which the *levée en masse* is liable, of the defence degenerating into a mob, enable the maintenance of the necessary civilian work and provide the local military command with expert workmen trained for a special object. It is, indeed, nothing else than an expansion of the idea which inspired the Local Defence Volunteers to other spheres, but it has the overwhelming advantage of rendering possible both a unified military control and the part-time participation of millions of working people in the defence of their homes. Though we reject the scheme of a *levée en masse*, we believe that its advocates are right in urging the need for the manufacture of anti-tank grenades and for training in their use. There are many different types which could be produced at once and which would be infinitely more effective than rifle-fire, as was proved in Spain. At present men ready to make them are being held up by Red Tape, and the L.D.V. are being taught to rely on rifles and shot-guns. The routineers who are determined to reject all innovations, especially those based on the Spanish experience, are a menace to the country. In an emergency, we must use emergency measures: and if the War Office or the Territorial Associations refuse to adapt themselves to the emergency they must be brought to order.

This brings us to the most serious defect of our Home Defence. At present General Ironside is in charge of the military forces, while some co-ordination of policy is provided by the Committee of Imperial Defence and the War Cabinet. But neither of these bodies provides an adequate central direction. What is needed is a Home Defence High Command or Committee of Public Safety on which there are not only representatives of the Navy, Army and Air Force but also civilians who know how to get the best out of the civilian population. Defence against invasion cannot be effective so long as we rely merely on the co-ordination of independent service departments and regard it as the work of the professional soldier, sailor and airman. That is the profound truth behind the theory of the people's war: and there is little evidence that the War Office has begun to understand it.

There remains one other problem which the Government has not yet seriously faced. The French defence was disastrously hampered by millions of refugees. That will happen here unless plans are now made to prevent it. A sound shelter policy will do much to help, but at least on the East Coast a complete evacuation of all civilians not engaged on work of national importance should now be undertaken. We are glad to note that plans for the evacuation of children overseas are now being prepared. Here the need is for speed and for measures to ensure that not only those with means will be able to participate in the scheme. Another precaution against chaotic civilian evacuation which should be considered is the commandeering of all private cars or, alternatively, an Order in Council that private cars may only be driven under permit. It was the wealthier car-driving population of Paris which blocked the French roads. Such people here should be told in advance that they must either evacuate in due time and under discipline or remain in their homes during the fighting.

It may be thought that the suggestions we have put forward are too obvious to be worth making. Such criticism, however, is altogether too optimistic. We believe that it will be found that not one of the these obvious suggestions has been carried into effect by the War Office or the Ministry of Home Security. While Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison have been manfully struggling to introduce some coherence and drive into our industrial production, the Home Defence Ministries have been completely unaffected by the change of Government. They are still the secure home of that complacent type of traditionalist who brought France to defeat. There is no evidence that they have learnt anything from the fates of General Gamelin and General Weygand. Many of them would rather be defeated according to Field Service Regulations than listen to the advice of men who know something about the Total War which has made those Regulations a bye-way of ancient history. It is common knowledge that certain Tory members of the Cabinet admit that this is the case, and many soldier M.P.s are ready to give their testimony. But this is not enough. Great responsibility rests with the Labour members of the War Cabinet. If they narrow their attention to industrial problems, they are failing in their duty: the issues we have raised must have been discussed in the Secret Session; after the debate we trust that the Labour Ministers will throw their influence behind the movement for reform. If we cannot have a Bevin at the War Office, we must at least demand that a similar spirit inspires the planning of our home defence.

IF NOT——

MR. CHURCHILL rightly assumed that the British are a stubborn people, willing to stand and fight in the last ditch. But he misunderstood their feeling when he talked of this as the finest moment of our history. Our feelings are more complex than that. To talk to common people in or out of uniform is to discover that determination to defend this island is coupled with a deep and almost universal bitterness that we have been reduced to such a pass.

Mr. Churchill has been the most eloquent of prophets during the Chamberlain Government. He warned the country in precise and energetic terms that England and France would not be able to defend themselves or their Empires if they allowed the League to be destroyed and if they refused an alliance with Russia. It has not been difficult to be a prophet during the last five years; we could fill an issue of this journal with quotations from past editorials in which we foretold the situation in which an isolated France and Britain would face a Europe under the domination of the Axis. The peculiar exasperation of these years of disastrous government has been just this ease of forecast. Events have moved with the ghastly precision of a classical tragedy. The first act was the failure after the last war to face either of the two great problems confronting mankind, the unification of Europe on a federal basis and the necessity for substituting a collectivist for a capitalist economy. The second stage was the perversion and then the destruction of the League, which was the tentative effort of the post-war world to find organisations which might some day tackle these problems. I need not tell that story again. The third act came with the growing strength of Hitler and the realisation that the new Germany sought not only territorial domination, but also the total destruction of the ideas on which Western civilisation had been built. After the betrayal of the League as a constructive instrument to solve the problem of Germany's relations with other countries, there was a chance of salvaging the situation by a "grand alliance" which would have prevented the German conquest and might have prevented the war. Again, our rulers, terrified always of the common people and of the workers, refused throughout the Spanish War and at Munich to touch the hand of Russia and continuously sought friendship with the enemies of our civilisation. The story of the efforts to go into partnership with the Axis Powers, the whole tragedy of appeasement, needs no repetition. Every week, one saw more clearly that by asking for a constructive policy for Europe, combined with resistance to the Nazi advance, we were merely ensuring, while the Chamberlain Government was in office, that we should get, not the policy we demanded but the war we wished to avoid. This has been the fate of the critics of the National Government—to ask for the best and to have enough influence to produce only the worst. The war could have been prevented. Britain and France could have begun a new era in Europe. When we called for collective security we were told we were warmongers; when we called for a Russian alliance in order to resist Hitler, we got no collective policy, but the lunatic guarantee of Poland without Russian support! The desire to resist Hitler did not get rid of Mr. Chamberlain; it simply pressed him into a guarantee which made war certain. Even when war itself came, we got no statement of war aims which would have given hopes for the future. We have only obtained, even during these nine months of war, the steady refusal of those in power to face the fact that the Nazis could only be opposed effectively by what was in effect a socialisation of British economy. When finally the full extent of the incompetence and nervelessness of the Chamberlain Government was revealed in the Norwegian campaign, a popular front Government, retaining within itself too many of its discredited predecessor, at length came into power; it was too late to provide the B.E.F. with the tanks and aeroplanes that they needed. Only now is it beginning to be understood how criminally incompetent the last Government was and some of our Ministers and Civil Servants still are.

A similar story has been repeated in one country after another. Poland provides the most extreme example. Up to the last minute, while the Nazi legions were thundering at the gates, the State remained feudal and absurd. No one doubted the courage of the Poles. They were so courageous that they sat sipping in the cafés and boasting of what they would do to the Germans even when the enemy crossed the frontier, for whose defence the Polish General Staff had not thought it necessary to prepare. At the last minute the Government fled and the population rallied to the defence of their capital. Hitler is said to have shed tears when he saw the massacre and desolation of Warsaw. "How wicked the people must have been," he is reputed to have said, "to force me to do this."

That is the extreme example of a ruling class, utterly arrogant and blind, deserving its destruction but unfortunately carrying to destruction with it the unfortunate people whom it has misgoverned. Something similar, if less extravagant, has happened in France. There, too, the common people, the common soldiers, have been misled and betrayed by their rulers. In Britain, the public is waking up to the realities terribly late. They have been ruled by men who could neither make peace nor war, who have thrown away allies who might have helped them, and who have not prepared for the war which their policy made inevitable. It is no wonder that coupled with a readiness to resist, there is amongst men and women a deep and bitter anger.

Mr. Churchill's tireless courage, his wonderful oratorical powers, his width of vision and prophetic insight make him at such a time a natural leader. He has the defect that he has never understood the social forces at work. He assumed too easily that destructive or defeatist elements in every country were due to treachery. He seems to have imagined that a bugle call from Britain would at once lead to a rally of all the neutrals to our side. That was true in 1935. It would still to some extent have been true at Munich. It ceased utterly to be true after the destruction of Poland, and that for two reasons. Large groups of people in the great and small nations alike have not rallied as they would have done in the past, partly because of the nature of modern war. To-day men without machines are powerless and none, except the Nazis, are mad enough to fight except with reluctance. The small neutrals were not "pro-German," but sections of their governments and populations naturally preferred a German conquest to a devastating war with the help of the Allies, whose competence to help them they gravely doubted. And they doubted more than their competence, they doubted their intentions and their aims. Goebbels has made good play with gibes about the plutodemocracies and those who have heard his gibes have known them in part at least to be true. No lead is given from this country that has offered general emancipation or a unified Europe. We have left the claim of a unified Europe to the brutality of the Nazis. This is still Hitler's principal propagandist card. Until Mr. Churchill's admirable offer to France of common citizenship there has been even from this reformed Government (overworked as it is) no clear and explicit statement of war aims which would make the world believe that Britain stood for anything but its own empire. Nothing has been said to reassure people that survival, which Mr. Churchill rightly declares to be the one necessity, means more than the survival of the imperial power of Britain; it should mean the emancipation of the common people from the control of high finance and big business as well as the defeat of the Nazi war machine.

Only one thing to-day seems quite clear. We must individually stand as best we may for those things to which we owe our highest allegiance. All of them are threatened by the Nazi regime. When Goebbels said that the Nazis exist to destroy "the principles of 1789," he spoke with precise truth. Instead of liberty, the Nazis offer slavery; instead of equality, they offer the rule of the Nordic brutality; instead of fraternity and internationalism, they offer an endless series of future wars. To those ideas none of us in England can surrender whatever may happen on the battlefield. There comes into my mind to-day the biblical story of the three men who were told that they would be thrown into a burning, fiery furnace unless they bowed down to false Gods. They replied: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace. But *if not*, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy Gods." And we will not.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A LONDON DIARY

ONE of the really sensible jobs in the world to-day is to get as many of the children as possible overseas. The United States and the Dominions have offered to take large numbers. A Parliamentary Committee is considering several projects. There is a Government scheme providing a free passage for a large number of children, and there is a voluntary scheme for people who can afford to pay. There are also certain special schemes for groups of people who would suffer without being able to help in the event of invasion. I understand that all refugee children from war areas in Europe now in this country are eligible for the Government scheme. In some ways I am more sorry for them than for anyone else. We have offered them protection. One of the most terrible stories from France is that of an internment camp near Paris where, I am told, the French guards remained on duty, preventing the foreign refugees from joining the exodus of the French population, until it was too late for them to escape the advancing Nazi troops. Perhaps the best hope for our kind of life is that as many children as possible should grow up in the more spacious atmosphere of America and the Dominions and should be spared the crippling psychological results of experiencing in childhood the noise and terrors of heavy bombardment.

* * *

A friend of mine, a provincial Councillor, tells me he received two deputations this week-end from a large industrial plant. The first complained that though they were working a 44 hour week, there was not enough work to do and they spent a lot of time playing games at the management's expense. The management did not mind the cost—it gets expenses plus 5 per cent.—and was anxious to put up an appearance of increased activity. When approached by the men, it argued that it was not its fault that work was short. The second deputation was composed of skilled men. One of them said "By last Friday mid-day, I had netted £15 on piece work rates. I felt bad about taking home any more than that in times like these and I worked slow after that. But that is not the proper way out. We don't want wages like that: we want to win the war. But while the Firm goes on making profits, of course, we have to get the best wages we can. Why don't they nationalise the industry, put everyone, management and the men, on a proper wage-scale for the duration. Then we should really feel that we were fighting for freedom. That is the way to increase production." A childish notion? Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. . . .

* * *

Mr. De Valera's great meeting was something of a portent in Ireland, but it carried no real assurance to any student of the Irish situation. Everyone knows that the I.R.A. in some parts of the South are well armed and prepared for action and that in the North they are far more united, bitter and dangerous. We all know, too, that they have many doubtful sympathisers, whose numbers will be greatly increased if British action, in the case of a rising or an invasion, takes the form of the entry into Ireland of troops from Ulster, headed by men with a Dublin Castle reputation. A big man appointed in Northern Ireland who guaranteed the freedom of the Free State, and capable of bringing the North into co-operation with the South in time of need, seems the first necessity. I also suggest that if Ireland has to be protected, some of the French soldiers now available would be more welcome than the British. There is a long tradition of French aid to Ireland and more than one song known to every Irishman welcoming French Republicans as the natural supporters of Republican Ireland. Of course, if the Americans were ready they would be ideal protectors of Ireland. No Irishman would suspect American motives. There must be many American Irish anxious to save the country of their fathers.

* * *

There has been much criticism lately of Capt. Liddell Hart, whose strategic views have had so much influence on British and French policy. It is said that he extolled the defensive and induced us to keep a small army and rely on the Maginot Line and the Navy and Air Force. But if you examine Liddell Hart's thesis, you will find that he always held that a military offensive could succeed against the defence, provided it had a three to one majority in the general weight of its attack. The Germans had more than a three to one majority of tanks and aeroplanes in France. The battle was lost the moment the Germans broke through the French defences, because men with small arms can do little against bombing aeroplanes and tanks. Liddell Hart might fairly argue that a larger British army in France would have made no difference. What the Allies needed was more tanks and aeroplanes; and it was always his view that Britain should concentrate on the production of war material which, in addition to a small mechanised army, would constitute its most effective aid to the armies of France. The difficulty of this theory, that I believe to have been technically sound, was that it enabled the German propagandists ceaselessly to tell the French that Britain was fighting her own battles with the blood of Frenchmen. There is no doubt that this propaganda was to some extent successful in France.

* * *

It is not the fault of Mr. Park, the gardener, that I have written so little of him recently. He has come out strong in the crisis and has views about what should be done to the Germans that are quite unprintable. A strong, wiry man, badly wounded in the last war, he at once became prominent in the L.D.V. On Sunday I found him very annoyed. The officer who has been in charge of the L.D.V., a popular and efficient man who lives in our village, is ill. His place has been taken by another colonel in a neighbouring town. As the result, three of the L.D.V. of Little Fishpond had been told to patrol

Great Fishpond which is a mile and a half away. Mr. Park said this was all wrong and others agreed with him. Their job was to look after Little Fishpond. The L.D.V. would resign if this sort of thing went on. But we had other things to talk about. A swarm of bees was passing overhead. Mr. Park hurried off to beat a tin can, with the astonishing result that the bees came straight down to swarm on the hedges near by. The methods of bee-keeping in Essex in 1940 have not changed since Virgil's *Georgics*. It was an enormous swarm which filled a large wooden box and it was fun to watch the bees, guided by a little smoke, walk up the steep board into the hive. Why, I asked Mr. Park, do they come down when you beat a can? For once Mr. Park had no theory. I have since bothered more learned folk about this strange piece of rural lore. There is a theory about vibrations; perhaps the bees think a thunder storm is coming. Or perhaps not. Very mysterious I call it. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Leonard W. Matters.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

The people were stunned by the news just after the first race at Wolverhampton yesterday, but, of course, carried on, and presumably the meeting to-day will go through, if only as a gesture of stoutness.—*Daily Mail* (Racing Expert).

All people of good health will have to maintain themselves, and it is possible that before long we shall also see the end of the days of free education. Those developments will see the beginning of the restoration of the nation.—City Editor, *Evening Standard*.

The week now opening should mark the turn of events in favour of the Allies. It may not appear so as you view the gravity of the situation in France. But from now on the charts suggest better news.—*The People*.

THAT GERMANY

OF all the dubious miracles of modern technique, perhaps the strangest is the use one may make of a wireless set in wartime. One's feet are in London, but one's ears are in Berlin. Lord Haw-Haw, of late, has become merely an offensive bore, but the ordinary German broadcasts designed for loyal listeners at home never lose their interest for me. There are limits to the amount one can endure of it, for even a little of it batters one's nervous system into a condition approaching shell-shock. Technically, in a popular way, the thing is well done. In the daily *Front-Bericht* we are actually transported to the front lines of the advancing armies. One listens to a junior officer reporting to his senior on his success in destroying French mines in the forests of the Argonne. Again, one is in an airport and the pilots of a bombing squadron discuss their orders before they set out on a raid. It is often done with a good deal of humour and some sense for drama. Men talk in the slang of the camp with their broad provincial accents, and there is more than enough realism to assist one's imagination. One day we were deafened by a record of the guns that bombarded Lille, and a week ago we heard everything that went on in a battery that shelled the retreating French army from a position in Verdun.

The chief impression that these broadcasts have left on me is that the German mind is now obsessed by the one idea of irresistible mechanical force. Every device of articulate and inarticulate sound is used to suggest it. Sometimes throughout an entire broadcast one hears, muffled behind the announcer's voice, the ceaseless tramp of the German legions, untiring, merciless, inexorable. It is varied only by the rattle and creaking of the "mechanised Attila's" tanks, and the roar of his diving planes. To this accompaniment a triumphant voice describes the shattering, blasting power of his engines of destruction. One recent talk stands out in my horrified memory. It was an account by two journalists of their passage through Rotterdam after the total destruction of the central quarters of the city. It had collapsed, they told us, like a house of cards. Every landmark was obliterated, and amid the sickly stench of charred flesh, they lost their way. Then they met a Dutch workman, who directed them. Anxious to conciliate the Lords of the Earth, he offered them a cigarette and admitted that the destruction was a military necessity. The vocabulary of the German language is rich in words that convey a sense of ruin, desolation, and irresistible force. I cannot reproduce this picture adequately: the horror of it lay in the pride of these observers, as they surveyed the annihilating work of their bombers. Then followed, as a companion picture, a vivid account of the abject surrender of Antwerp. It knew what had happened to Rotterdam and was too wise to court a like fate. Some Belgian prisoners were then brought in to execrate in broken German the politicians who first misled their country and then abandoned it. The next item on this wavelength was Schubert's exquisite Fifth Symphony. After these Nazi brutalities it brought to life again the sweetness and light that were Vienna. Millions of listening Germans enjoyed them both.

Almost daily we are treated to some masterpiece of description that teaches the listener to visualise German power. A recent vignette haunts me. The narrator began by laughing at the B.B.C., which had described the German troops crossing rivers over the heaped bodies of their own dead. The truth, he said, was the other way round. Then came a lurid picture of the pursuit to the Loire of French armies in full dissolution. In a chamber within a bridge the French had placed a charge of dynamite. A bomber, diving on this bridge, struck it by chance exactly on this chamber. The bridge blew up, and the hurling of colossal masses of its concrete structure over the distant landscape was described in vivid pictorial language. Hundreds of French troops who were crossing the great bridge, horses, mules, guns and lorries were tossed into the air and fell into the stream. On their bodies, the pursuing Germans might have crossed dry-shod.

More poignant and a little more human was the account of the fall of Verdun, barely defended. A veteran told the story of its defence for six months in 1916 at the cost of 700,000 lives, French and German. Then, still hoarse with the smoke of battle, a young artillery lieutenant told how easily the lads of to-day had succeeded where their fathers failed. Here I turned off my wireless, for I found his tale unendurable. Its climax was the posting of his battery round the monument on Dead Man's Hill, erected jointly by the French and German survivors of the war to end war.

There have been fewer paeans to triumphant mechanical force in the last few days. The theme is now *vae victis*! By recounting the brutalities of the Versailles Peace, notably the forced delivery by a half-starved Germany of hundreds of thousands of milch cows and the prolongation of the blockade for seven months after the armistice, these official broadcasts prepare the German public for the pleasures of revenge. Have I nothing good to report? Yes; sandwiched between the raucous brutalities, I heard one day a moving account of the heroism of the French rearguard near Lille. Four thousand men, surrounded on all sides, entrenched themselves in an outer suburb, refused repeated offers of honourable terms and sold their lives dear to save their comrades and the B.E.F. who were retreating to Dunkirk. From time to time, they carried their wounded out and laid them down in No Man's Land, trusting to the humanity of the invaders. "Our chivalry (*Ritterlichkeit*)," said the narrator, "was worthy of these brave men's confidence." That word, then, is still in the German dictionary. H. N. BRAILSFORD

THE NEW INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

ANYONE who tries to follow the progress of The New Industrial Revolution since the speed-up began with the change of Government, ought, like the armchair strategists, to have a map and a lot of little flags. Then it might be possible to keep track of the day-by-day, almost hour-by-hour changes which are taking place in our industrial structure, to plot the breaches in the old system by those Flying Columns, the new Boards, and mark the rearguard action of the Old Guard, aided not a little by the delaying tactics of the Civil Service tradition.

One of the leaders of those Flying Columns meets me most evenings with the smile that was on the face of the tiger. And I know that another chunk of private enterprise has been swallowed up or another old institution has been absorbed into the new organisation. For instance, there was the Factories Department of the Home Office. It was founded 107 years ago, when the first factory inspectors were appointed and made answerable to the Secretary of State. The work that the Department has done in the intervening century has been admirable; it pioneered the way to universal education by its insistence on the factory schools; it brought air, light and sanitation into the slum factories of the First Industrial Revolution; it engineered progressive Factories Acts; established medical inspection; supervised young labour; prevented and prohibited dangerous processes and tackled the problems of industrial diseases.

But, in the changing industrial world of the past 25 years, it was out of place in the isolation of the Home Office. By every reasonable argument,

it belonged to the Ministry of Labour. It was part of a greater whole. "Tradition" could muster enough arguments to resist all suggestions of change. But Mr. Ernest Bevin had scarcely taken over his new office before, by Order in Council, it was transferred to his Department.

Now it is an integral part of the great new conception which he has brought into industry, in the new Health and Welfare Board. The Factories Department will be responsible for conditions within the factories, but alongside it will be a new Welfare Department concerned with conditions outside—canteens, crêches for children whose parents are at work, industrial medical services, hostel arrangements and the general amelioration of the working lives of men and women in industry.

On to that Board, he has brought Sir David Munro, secretary of the Industrial Health Research Board. That Research Board grew out of the Fatigue in Industry Committee which investigated speed-up conditions in the last war. It laid down the scientific arguments for shorter hours. Later it became an adjunct of the Medical Research Council, mainly to advise on industrial health problems and, where the knowledge was lacking, to conduct researches. But it was not used to the extent, nor in the way, it should have been in the service of the workers in industry.

To-day, when Herbert Morrison calls "Go to it" and Bevin asks workers to work long hours seven days a week and sacrifice their holidays, the problems which concern the Industrial Health Research Board are becoming clamant and acute. For neither of these Ministers nor anyone else who knows at first hand the stresses and strains of modern production upon the workers has any illusions about the human effect if the speed-up has to be maintained for a long period under these conditions. The Fatigue Board showed how in the last war, over a period of sustained working, twelve hours' work produced only ten hours' production, while a six hours' shift produced six hours' work. It showed the need for rest pauses and for holidays not only in the interest of the workers but of output. Men and women can stand the pace for so long (long enough one hopes to meet the needs of the present crisis and take up the slack of criminal neglect of the previous Government) but the pace will begin to tell.

They will be working under even worse conditions than the last war because black-out has meant bad lighting and worse ventilation. There is the added strain of anxiety about possible air raids. And there is the increased tempo of present-day production. Unless we are careful we shall have large numbers of industrial neurasthenics—"machine-shocked" instead of "shell-shocked" cases.

Bevin has seen those dangers and, while the extremity of the present situation demands unsparing effort, he is building the enduring machinery of industrial care. Communal feeding will see that men and women in industry are properly fed. The factory inspectorate and the Industrial Health Research Board will see to it that conditions of work in the factories are rapidly improved. An efficient industrial medical service will provide medical welfare and reduce the industrial casualties. As fresh recruits go into industry and greater efficiency is demanded from employers, the experts whom he has gathered round him with vision and shrewdness will see that proper rest pauses and rest days are provided. Already in well-managed factories, 24-hour-a-day working of the precious machine-tools is possible on a basis of "six-days on and two days off" for the workers through a system of reliefs.

His Boards will also be responsible for recruitment and training for industry. There will be intelligent use of vocational selection for industry—not necessarily elaborate psychological tests, but tests for aptitude sufficient for a "rough sort." The use of films will speed up training of new recruits for industry. Complicated processes can be made visible and simple by the device of the films. The Ministry of Information has a call on the portable projector reserves and output of the country. Film technicians, whose skill is being wasted through delay and neglect at the moment, can be called on to produce at short notice the technical films required for the training establishments. The Air Ministry and the War Office are using films extensively for military purposes but the possibilities have been neglected and despised by private industrial enterprises. Now is the time for Government initiative.

The restrictions on luxury production will release large numbers of skilled workers who can be readily adapted for war-production. For instance, men who made the delicate mechanisms of refrigerators can be switched over to the equally delicate work of making predictors for the anti-aircraft batteries. Goldsmiths and silversmiths, whose craftsmanship has hitherto been devoted to the gratification of the wealthy few, could be used in the making of equally delicate dies and moulds for the plastics industry.

And that will be important in post-war as well as wartime production. Instead of making chaste goblets whose exquisite workmanship edifies the butler when he burnishes them in his pantry or glorifies the owner when they are unearthed from vaults on rare occasions, these craftsmen will be creating for the benefit of the multitude. And in terms of craftsmanship, a plastic mould is just as perfect and beautiful a job as the most expensive piece of family plate. But the pleasure its beauty gives is passed on to thousands instead of being a monopoly of wealth.

One of the essentials of urgent war-production, but equally of the future development of The New Industrial Revolution, is flexibility in industry. Over-specialisation, the training of workers for one type of job, is causing complications of a serious nature to-day. The need of the moment is to be able to switch men from one type of production to another. That will be equally true in the post-war world, when mass-production, its possibilities multiplied by the present speed-up, will be able to satisfy rapidly the demand for a particular kind of commodity. But there will be labour displacement and waste, aggravated technological unemployment, unless both machines and men can be adapted to meeting other demands—switched over from boot-making to canning, from perambulators to television sets.

So the swing is away from the robot men to the versatile skilled men; and training must follow the movement. "Horizontal promotion" can equip the modern skilled technician. By this process the boy from school goes into the apprentice-training shop to learn how to use his hands and then he is moved through every department of an industry, even from factory to factory, until he is familiar with production technique and has developed a proficiency which will make him not only highly adaptable within that industry, but even outside it. Another grade emerging from technical schools or the university engineering departments, with the theory already acquired, passes through research, development, designing, planning, budgeting and scientific management.

But there is "vertical promotion" also from one grade to the other for those with special aptitude. While modern production methods are challenging the narrower definitions of the crafts and threatening the future of many of the craft unions, the skilled technician—the adaptable craftsman—is coming into his own again. Neglect of him by the blindness of employers in recent years is having its effects now. One of the jobs of the new and powerful Labour Supply Board set up by the Minister for Labour has been to try to correct those mistakes.

Toolmakers, for instance, are creative craftsmen whose skill is vital at this moment, but for 20 years employers have been resisting their proper recognition, denying them wages according to their skill or, in fact, comparable to those earned on the "production line" by semi-skilled men. So they naturally drifted on to the production line in search of bigger money and their skill was lost.

The Board demanded of industry that, within 24 hours, this long-standing grievance should be settled or . . . ! It was settled within the time-limit. Those who had resisted for 20 years decided in as many hours. Toolmakers are now being attracted back from the production line. Brooking no excuses, these Boards are getting things done. The members are practical men and women. They know what efficiency means and they intend to get it, regardless of vested interests or of Civil Service "caution."

The really heartening thing however is that, now, "under entirely new management," these things are being done not merely as a matter of desperate expediency but with an eye to the future. The demands of war are paramount, but the Ministers and the experts whom they have called in are looking beyond to the post-war world as well. They are blue-printing the New Industrial Revolution. RITCHIE CALDER

HOW TO BE BRILLIANT

"BRILLIANT speaking and writing at a glance!" If one had seen that advertisement of a handbook to perfection in one's teens, how the heart would have responded! Not that I had ever much ambition to be a brilliant speaker: on a platform I always had a feeling that I was an impostor. But to be able to write—to discover the secret that Swift and Addison knew but could not bequeath to their successors—what labour or money would one have grudged in pursuit of such an end? Most of us who wanted to write in those days took it for granted that to write well was exceedingly difficult. We read of Stevenson's playing the sedulous ape to the masters and of Flaubert's spending a whole day in agony in search of the perfect word. And we believed that in no other way could we achieve that mastery of words of which we dreamed.

How lucky the younger generation is to be preserved from those torments! The book to which the advertisement I have quoted refers, *Hartrampf's Vocabularies*, appears to make writing almost as easy as choosing a meal in a restaurant. "Here," runs the advertisement, "is amazing facility. Words and ideas leap into the mind. Vitalise the message—grip the interest—sway—convince—compel. Easy—quick—sure." Under this machine-gun fire of phrasing, who could doubt the claim that *Hartrampf's Vocabularies* "provides brilliant word power"?

As an illustration of what the book can do for the speaker or writer, the publishers point out that "the word 'beautiful' has become trite and commonplace because of its repeated use; yet a single list of words in *Hartrampf's Vocabularies* will enable one to clothe beauty with fascinating charm and dazzling brilliance." "For instance," the advertisement goes on, "you can picture a great scene or gown or a maiden as admirable, adorable, captivating, delightful, divine, enchanting, entrancing, exquisite, fascinating, glorious, gorgeous, grand, incomparable, magnificent, marvellous, rapturous, matchless,

rich, superb; and emphasise their beauty with such combinations as: alluringly fair, charmingly exquisite, fascinatingly dainty, entrancingly divine, superlatively glorious, delightfully bewitching, incomparably handsome, superbly captivating. Over two hundred words, with which to clothe all the imaginable shades of beauty, are in the list."

That is certainly a superlatively glorious list of synonyms. But, even so, I think a writer would in many circumstances have to exercise care in choosing an alternative to the hackneyed word "beautiful." Without care, for example, if he were making a new translation of the Bible, he might find himself writing: "How fascinatingly dainty upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" Or, describing a fine day in the present summer, he might let loose his enthusiasm in such a sentence as: "It was a delightfully bewitching day." I am rather in favour of sticking to the simple old word, "beautiful," when one means "beautiful." If a woman were told by a man that she was entrancingly divine, she would feel, I am sure, that she was being addressed, not by a lover, but by a crooner.

It seems to me, indeed, that some of the synonyms given in this great book might lead those who do not already know English into making curious errors. Thus, under the heading "Thankful" we get the following definitions:

Gracious, thankful.
Grateful, fulsome.
Thankful, grateful.

I am only a child in these matters; but I confess, I feel almost certain that it is wrong to believe that "gracious" means "thankful." I cannot believe that "God save our thankful King" would mean the same thing as "God save our gracious King." Nor would "Goodness thankful!" sound as correct as "Goodness gracious!" Again, it was news to me that "thankful" suggests "fulsome," and that "thankful," since it suggests "grateful," must suggest "fulsome," too. It is true that the work appears to be drawn up on the pattern rather of a thesaurus than of a dictionary. Still, it seems odd to me to find the words "gracious" and "thankful" associated as words with a similar meaning.

Even Dr. Jung, I think, would have been surprised by some of the word-associations suggested in the *Vocabularies*. Here, for example, is a list of words, headed "Compliment":

Admiration, worship.
Compliment, praise.
Congratulation, felicitations.
Felicitation, congratulation.
Felicity, praise.
Reverence, veneration.
Veneration, worship.
Worship, ardent praise.

Most of this is sound enough, but admiration is some way from worship, and, if "felicity" ever meant "praise," this occurred outside my experience.

Yet many eminent men appear to have benefited from a study of the book. D.Sc.s and D.Litt.s have written testimonials in its favour. One famous man writes: "With this book at my elbow I can express any shade of meaning. I can unlimber my thoughts, confine my expression or give wider scope to my feelings. It has proved to be an unfailing Micrometer of Meaning." You could hardly want a more convincing testimonial than that. Another vocabularist, a Director of an Education Association, writes: "I shall sing its praise in my letters and speeches"—an exceilent example of the use of the word "sing." Then we are given photographs of cheques that various firms have paid for the book, and, as the old saying has it, money talks. These cheques, say the publishers, "represent purchases by some of the most eminent firms and leading authorities of the day. They give overwhelming corroboration to our claim that *Hartrampf's Vocabularies* 'is the greatest invention since the alphabet.'" Watts, Stephenson, Edison and Marconi must now be content to dwindle to their proper size. Pretty small beer they look under the vast shadow of the inventor of *Hartrampf's Vocabularies*.

To make full use of the book, however, you must not be content with looking up synonyms. You must also study an *Idea and Word Chart*. If you do this, apparently, this "epochal achievement in literature" will "facilitate the achievement of precision and amazing power in speech. Writers and speakers may easily achieve distinction, and the distinguished become supremely eminent." Nor is this all. The book is also "a work of deep philosophical import." "A brief new section headed 'The Cosmological Chart' shows how the Hartrampf system of idea classification brings within its ambit all human thought. The same law which inter-relates a name or noun with all other names or nouns inter-relates and classifies the thoughts and ideas which lie behind words." I never had a head for philosophy, so I do not quite follow that bit.

Nor am I clear about the meaning of the "Cosmological Phenomena Chart," subtitled: "History of Human Experience." I am puzzled when I read in the letterpress below the chart: "Not only does this book give a better understanding of basic principles and a comprehensible classification of human experience, it gives a chart of these principles and experiences that, with a little help, a child can understand. The chart gives simple and unerring guidance to the basic factors that are necessary to bring about any desired result. It is a scientific interpretation of the phenomena that keep the universe in perfect working order, and it is, therefore, a trustworthy standard of perfection—a pattern or paragon—that one may use as a touchstone for achieving perfection in any activity."

Now, if I am offered a book that will teach me how to write well, I have a clear idea of what is being offered to me. But, if I am offered a book containing a chart that "gives simple and unerring guidance to the basic factors that are necessary to bring about any desired result," I feel as if I were being talked to by a would-be benefactor whose language I do not understand. Am I being offered unerring guidance to the basic factors necessary to my becoming a modern Solomon, or the saviour of Europe, or a prosperous greengrocer, or what? The offer sounds generous to the point of extravagance. It sounds, indeed, like an offer of the seven-league boots and the cloak of invisibility, with the magic carpet thrown in. If it were couched in less philosophical words, I might be inclined to accept it.

The further I read, however, the more I am baulked by philosophy too profound for me. What can a non-metaphysician make of it, for example, when he is told that the "Cosmological Phenomena Chart" is called so because this title "implies the *universal efficacy of phenomena* in the sense that the Creator uses the phenomena in sounds to create the aural senses, and the phenomena in light to create the visual senses, not only on this earth, but in every planet where life exists in the presence of such phenomena. And likewise, due to analogous influences, all the senses are *common phenomena* on every inhabited planet"? It implies no criticism of the book, of course, that I happen to be a person to whom phrases like "the universal efficacy of phenomena" mean nothing. Perhaps, if I studied *Hartrampf's Vocabularies* for a few years, I should be able to understand such phrases. If I do buy it, however, it will not be in order to make myself into a philosopher, but because of the beautiful—the fascinatingly dainty—promise held out in the advertisement: "Any intelligent person with this amazing book can use words with the precision, clarity and brilliance of a 'word master.'" Y. Y.

COUNTRY NOTES

I HAVE read that in some part of the United States an underground cache has been prepared, a cache of buried history, which may reveal to the historian of 10,000 A.D. not only the major events which led ultimately to the disappearance of Western civilisation, assuming all our printed matter, books, newspapers, periodicals, photographs, cinema films and other records to have perished by then, either by the hand of man or time, but also the details of daily life which, however insignificant, formed part of our make-up. Easier to read than the fossils; requiring (one hopes) no Rosetta Stone; more explicit than the charred striated hearths or scratched depictment of the Cro-Magnon caves, this pitiably provident cache should earn the gratitude of our descendants. One has only to consider how grateful we ourselves should be for a similar prescience on the part of any Pharaoh or of Bur-Sin, King of Ur.

It is to be hoped that some small effects of war on rural districts will not be omitted from this comprehensive record. One calls them small effects, not because they are unimportant in themselves, but because they are unexpected, unusual, and minor in comparison with the major doings on a grander and more tragic scale. Thus I can imagine that it might startle and amuse our descendants to learn that at a given moment England removed all sign-posts from her roads, obliterated all names of villages from her post offices and tradesmen's vans, and, in short, did everything possible to confuse not only an air-borne enemy but also the most innocent motorist trying to find his way about his own native island. This is the sort of thing which easily gets forgotten when the serious historian starts to pull out his Gibbonian organ-stops. One wag suggested, I believe, that instead of removing our sign-posts we should reverse them, but although the idea was considered by the authorities it was finally rejected, and an impression of actual silence now reigns at the cross-roads. There are no longer any friendly little remarks to inform us whether we are making for Rye or Hastings.

It is curious also to come suddenly on a group of old waggons waiting by the side of our peaceful lanes. It is for barricades that they are wanted, not for hay. They remind one of films of the French Revolution. Curious also are the occupations in which people now indulge: I had never thought to spend an afternoon filling old wine bottles with petrol, paraffin and tar, and finishing them off with two of Messrs. Brock's gay blue Guy Fawkes squibs bound tightly to the sides. These absurd but lethal missiles are known facetiously as Molotov cocktails, with that English gift for meiosis to which Y. Y. recently referred. This novel form of bottle-party is conducted with the usual supply of English chaff and good-humour: it is quite difficult to detect the underlying grimness. Every now and then a flight of aeroplanes passes over, glittering silver in the summer sky. An onlooker, aged two, points upwards. "Bombers," she says, cheerfully. "Germits." Thus does the youngest generation accept as a matter of course the facts of war.

And every evening at dusk the tramp of feet goes up my tower, passing the door as I sit working. Very slow and heavy they go, like the tramp of men-at-arms. Seventy-five steps they climb, dwindling into silence, and when I go out later I see two figures outlined against the moon behind the parapet. My solitary old tower! It must have watched many things, and whenever it rocks in a gale I reflect for my comfort that it must have rocked in many gales without coming down during the past four hundred years. It watched three thousand French prisoners quartered here in 1760 under the guard of Edward Gibbon; it watched German prisoners quartered here in 1916. Now in 1940 it acts as a lookout post for the L.D.V. with their rifles slung across their backs. The baker's boy and the blacksmith's son are carrying on the tradition.

It watches also the seasonal processes which must be familiar to it since it is forty years older than Thomas Tusser and the publication of his Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry; the calm processes which have never yet been interrupted. We are still making hay and shearing sheep. My tower was already standing when Queen Elizabeth said in a temper, "I will not have my sheep marked with a strange brand, nor suffer them to follow the pipe of a strange shepherd." She would have said the same to-day.

She who had a gift of phrase and mettle far removed from meiosis, would, I think, have approved of the baker's boy and the blacksmith's son watching the English meadows from the top of a tower already half a century old when the Invincible Armada sailed against England. She would have felt a virago pride in seeing the tower standing English, perennial, rustic, and alone. V. SACKVILLE-WEST

THE SUFFERINGS OF A SENTIMENTAL SPORTSMAN

ONE day I went for a ride on my bicycle. My bicycle is quite a decent one, of British make, a B.S.A. I use it as a means of recreation, and also as a sort of sedative for the nerves. I find that a bicycle ride often helps me to regain my mental balance.

Yes, my bicycle is a fine modern machine. The only drawback is that it hasn't got all the wheels it ought to have. I mean to say that both the wheels are there, of course, but they are different wheels. They were made by different firms. The front wheel was made in England by a firm called "Three Guns," and the back wheel in Germany by a firm called "Dux." And the handle-bars were made in the Ukraine. However, it's not at all a bad bicycle. It goes. Especially in dry weather.

I must admit, though, quite frankly that it is a torture to ride it. I go for a ride on it only to regain my mental balance, and also when I feel that my life is no longer worth living.

To go back to the beginning, I was riding it along a street one day, and turned off into a boulevard. I got as far as the main avenue, turned off into a side path and went pedalling along, quietly and steadily.

An autumnal scene opened up before me. Some yellowing grass. A flower-bed with withered flowers. Yellow leaves strewn over the path. And a pale northern sky above me. Birds twittering here and there. A crow searching for food among some rubbish. A small grey dog barking outside a house. All very peaceful and nice.

And as I gazed at this autumnal picture, my heart somehow grew soft within my breast. I felt disinclined to think of unpleasant things. I pictured to myself a remarkably pleasant life. Communion with nice understanding people. People who have respect towards one another's personality. People whose customs and morals are not harsh, who are fond of their kind. People who are not brutal and do not curse one another for nothing.

And because I had these thoughts I suddenly felt as if I could embrace anyone who came along and tell him many good things. I felt like shouting aloud: "Brothers! Friends! All the worst is now left behind. Soon we shall live a most beautiful life!"

Suddenly I heard a sharp whistle.

"Someone must have done something wrong," I said to myself. "Someone must have crossed the road in a wrong direction or in a wrong place. In future such things will not happen. In future we shall rarely hear these sharp sounds of a whistle telling us of mistakes, fines, and the breaking of regulations."

But once again, now quite close behind my back the whistle sounded, followed by shouts and a dreadful oath.

"In future they will not shout in such gruff voices," I went on thinking. Or perhaps they will still shout, but will never swear so horribly and insultingly."

At that moment I realised that someone was running beside me. The man was shouting in a hoarse voice:

"No, you shan't get away from me, you son of a dog. I have you. Stop at once, you devil!"

"Someone's being chased," I said to myself, and continued pedalling, slowly but steadily.

"Leshka!" shouted another voice. "Get round on his left. Cut across. Don't let him get away!"

I glanced to the left and saw a youth who was brandishing a cudgel and showing his fist threateningly. But I still could not see who was the object of these threats.

I turned round. A grey-haired attendant of respectable appearance was running along the avenue shouting at the top of his voice:

"Stop him, brothers, catch him! Leshka, don't for God's sake let him get away."

Leshka aimed at me with his cudgel, and threw it so skilfully that it struck the front wheel of my bike.

Only then did I realise that the whole affair concerned me and no other person. I jumped off my bicycle and stood waiting for them. The attendant ran up to me, panting for breath. "Hold him!" he shouted.

Half a dozen volunteers ran up after him and seized me by the arms. "Brothers," said I, "are you mad, or what? Have you gone off your heads like this old fool here?"

"When I hit you across the mug and knock out your teeth for you, you'll stop insulting a man who's discharging his duty," shouted the attendant. "Hold him fast, brothers. Don't let this son of a bitch get away."

A crowd gathered round. "What has he done?" someone asked.

"I'm fifty-three years of age," said the attendant. "He, the devil, nearly killed me with chasing him. He was cycling on a wrong path. There's a notice up there that bicycles are not allowed on this path. But he, the pigheaded fool, went straight along it. I whistled to stop him. And he, instead of stopping, pedalled away. He didn't understand what the signal meant, you see. As if he had just tumbled down from the moon! It was a good thing that my assistant managed to stop him."

The youth Leshka pushed through the crowd, seized me by the arms with his fingers as hard as pincers and cried:

"I threw the cudgel, aiming at his arm, to break it so that the snake couldn't ride any more."

"Brothers," I said, "I swear to you I had no notion that it was forbidden to cycle on this path. I did not want to run away."

"He didn't want to run away!" the guard shouted, panting. "You see what a brazen liar he is. Take him to the police. Hold him fast. Fellows like him always try to run away. I know!"

"Listen, brothers," said I. "I'm ready to pay the fine. I don't refuse to pay. Please stop twisting my arms."

"Let him show his papers," said one. "And let him pay the fine if he wants to. What's the use of taking him to the police? He hasn't done anything very wrong after all."

The attendant and some of the volunteers were very keen on dragging me off to the police station, but the rest of the crowd took my side, and the attendant agreed to accept my fine in the end. He swore horribly as I paid him, and at last let me go with obvious reluctance. I walked off, leading my bicycle and tottering on my feeble legs. My head reeled, and all sorts of circles and dots were revolving fast before my eyes. My heart was burning in my breast.

In my distress I let some silly words escape me. I repeated twice: "Oh, my God, my God!" Then I rubbed my arms and said: "Ugh!" into space.

When I reached the embankment I got on my bicycle again.

"You're making too much fuss about nothing," I said to myself.

"You shouldn't mind so much having your arms twisted a bit."

Slowly I rode along the embankment. Gradually, the horrid coarse scene of a few minutes ago faded out of my mind. I began to picture to myself the charming scenes of the near future.

In my dream I saw myself riding a bicycle with the wheels which were as alike as two drops of water. And I saw myself taking again the ill-fated turning into the forbidden avenue.

Suddenly I heard someone laugh. I turned and saw the attendant in a soft green hat coming towards me. He had a flower in his hand —a forget-me-not, an autumn tulip or something of the sort. Toying with the flower and smiling he told me:

"Well, now, where have you got to, my dear friend? What have you been dreaming about? You know it isn't the right path, don't you? You absent-minded fellow! Do you mind turning back? Otherwise, I'll punish you, I won't give you this flower."

And laughing gently, he handed me the flower. We gazed at each other a little longer with mutual admiration, and then parted.

This charming imaginary episode soothed my sufferings. I continued to pedal with great energy. I kept my feet going round and round. I said to myself: "Never mind. Your heart won't break yet for a while. You're still young. You can wait indefinitely."

And again happiness and love of humanity filled my breast. I felt like saying something nice to every person I met. I felt like shouting: "Comrades, we're building a new life, we have conquered, we've overcome enormous difficulties. Let us make an effort and show a little more respect for one another!" MICHAEL ZOSHCHENKO

(Translated by Elizaveta Fen)

HEINE'S WARNING TO FRANCE

[The following extract from Heine's *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* has been sent us by a correspondent as a companion piece to "The Prophecies of Jack London" which we published a fortnight ago. The book was published in 1835, but this passage, deleted from the first German edition by the Prussian censor, appeared only in the French translation. To-day all the works of Heine are banned in Germany.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

The German Revolution will not prove any milder or gentler because it was preceded by the "Critique" of Kant, by the "Transcendental Idealism" of Fichte, or even by the Philosophy of Nature. These doctrines served to develop revolutionary forces that only await their time to break forth and to fill the world with terror and with awe. Then will appear Kantians as little tolerant of piety in the world of deeds as in the world of ideas, who will mercilessly upturn with sword and axe the soil of our European life in order to extirpate the last remnants of the past. There will come upon the scene armed Fichteans whose fanaticism of will is to be restrained neither by fear nor by self-interest; for they live in the spirit; they defy matter like those early Christians who could be subdued neither by bodily torments nor by bodily delights. Yes, in a time of social revolution these transcendental idealists will prove even more pertinacious than the early Christians; for the latter endured earthly martyrdom in the hope of attaining celestial blessedness, whilst the transcendental idealist looks on martyrdom itself as a vain show, and is invulnerable within the entrenchment of his own thought.

But most of all to be feared would be the philosophers of nature were they actively to mingle in a German revolution, and to identify themselves with the work of destruction. For if the hand of the Kantian strikes with strong unerring blow, his heart being stirred by no feeling of traditional awe; if the Fichtean courageously defies every danger, since for him danger has in reality no existence; the Philosopher of Nature will be terrible in this, that he has allied himself with the primitive powers of nature, that he can conjure up the demoniac forces of old German pantheism; and having done so, there is aroused in him that ancient German eagerness for battle which combats not for the sake of destroying, not even for the sake of victory, but merely for the sake of combat itself.

Christianity—and this is its fairest merit—subdued to a certain extent the brutal warrior ardour of the Germans, but it could not entirely quench it; and when the cross, that restraining talisman, falls to pieces, then will break forth again the ferocity of the old combatants, the frantic Berserker rage whereof Northern poets have said and sung—the talisman has become rotten, and the day will come when it will pitifully crumble to dust. The old stone gods will then arise from the forgotten ruins and wipe from their eyes the dust of centuries, and Thor with his giant hammer will arise again, and he will shatter the Gothic cathedrals.

When you hear the trampling of feet and the clashing of arms, ye neighbours children, ye French, be on your guard. . . . Smile not at my counsel, at the counsel of a dreamer, who warns you against Kantians, Fichteans, Philosophers of Nature. Smile not at the phantasy of one who foresees in the region of reality the same outburst of revolution that has taken place in the region of intellect. The thought precedes the deed as the lightning the thunder. German thunder is of true German character. It is not very nimble, it rumbles along somewhat slowly. But come it will, and when you hear a crashing as never before has been heard in the world's history, then know at last the German thunderbolt has fallen. At this commotion *the eagles will drop dead from the skies* and the lions in the farthest wastes of Africa will bite their tails and creep into the royal lairs. There will be played in Germany a drama compared to which the French revolution will seem but an innocent idyll. At present it is true, that everything is tolerably quiet; and though here and there few men can create a little stir, don't imagine these are the real actors in the piece. They are only little curs chasing one another round the empty arena, barking and snapping at one another, till the appointed hour when the troop of gladiators appears to fight for life and death.

And the hour will come. As on the steps of an amphitheatre, the nations will group themselves around Germany to witness the terrible combat. I counsel you, ye French, keep very quiet, and, above all, don't applaud. We might readily misunderstand such applause, and, in our rude fashion, somewhat roughly put you to silence. For, if formerly in our servile listless mood we could oftentimes overpower you, much easier were it for us to do so in the arrogance of our newborn enthusiasm. You yourselves know what, in such a case, men can do; and you are no longer in such a case. Take heed, then! I mean it well with you. Therefore it is I tell you the bitter truth. You have more to fear from a free Germany than from the entire Holy Alliance with all its Croats and Cossacks. For, in the first place, they don't love you in Germany, which is almost incomprehensible, since you are so amiable, and during your stay amongst us took such pains to please at least the better and fairer half of the German people. But even though this half still loved you, it is precisely the half that does not bear arms, and whose friendship, therefore, would be of little help to you. What you are really accused of I could never understand. Once in a beer-cellar at Goettingen I heard a young Old-German assert that it was necessary to be revenged on France for Conradin of Hohenstaufen, whom you beheaded at Naples. Doubtless you have long since forgotten that: we, however, forget nothing. You see, then, that whenever we have a mind to quarrel with you there will be no lacking of valid grounds; in any case, I advise you to be on your guard. Happen what may in Germany, be you ever armed, remain quietly at your post, your weapons in your hands. I mean it well with you, and I was seized with dismay when I heard it said lately that your Ministry proposed to disarm France.

As you are, despite your present romantic tendency, a born classical people, you know Olympus. Amongst the joyous gods and goddesses quaffing and feasting of nectar and ambrosia, you may behold one goddess, who, amidst such gaiety and pastime, wears ever a coat of mail, the helm on her head and the spear in the hand.

She is the goddess of Wisdom. E. S.

DRAGON FLIES

WHAT drinks the dragon-fly, that dart of blue light,
The small, the slender one, in June late, or July,
Among the irises, upon the water-lilies, by the bright rock rose
Overhanging the goldfish, dark and yellow in the sunshine?

Drowsy, the tortoise sits by the water edge
On him the air is keener than a razor,
His seat of stone and his shell together getting hotter,
His little webbed feet like darker-dimpled water.

Those blue darts multiply as the day grows warmer
The leaf-packed lily buds are burst asunder
Red-pale and crimson to burn upon the water
Suddenly unfolded. What drinks the dragon fly?

He drinks the limitless, the boundless azure
Hence is he blue, like the poppy of Himal'ya—
Ten thousand feet high o'er the snow wide-waving
Happy like a sea of inland blue water.

Spirits of an alcohol unknown to earth-men,
Delight-drunken fiends half colour, half madness,
The Dragon-flies battle, by the fires of their nature
Mid the waves of the wind on the glittering water.

W. J. TURNER

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Three Ashton Ballets at Sadler's Wells

Frederick Ashton is one of the few artists on whom the war has exerted a really creative pressure, and the measure of it is made vivid when one sees on one programme two pre-war ballets flanking his latest ballet *The Wise Virgins*. One welcomes the revival of the bizarre, high-spirited and ingenious *Wedding Bouquet*, in which he collaborated with Gertrude Stein and Lord Berners, but it perhaps strikes one now as too verbose, and, for all its droll extravagancies, as somehow too actual. The chorus in evening dress which hurls Gertrude Stein's text at us from the side of the stage is an excellent idea, but one would appreciate it better if one could distinguish more words among the sound; it would be a good idea to print them on the programme. Robert Helpmann's gift for mime makes him ideal for the role of the Bridegroom, and the whole cast danced brilliantly. *Apparitions* is interesting as showing us Ashton's first approach to Liszt, and in view of its remarkable similarity in subject with Massine's masterpiece, *Symphonie Fantastique*, it must be noted that it was composed at least two years earlier. But it would not be fair to press the comparison. *Apparitions*, though clearly very popular, is not one of Ashton's best works, as it is also not one of Cecil Beaton's best scenic efforts. It has of course some lovely passages, but it is diffuse, like the Liszt music to which it is composed, and lacks the clear constructive vision of his later Liszt masterpiece, *Dante Sonata*, and of his incomparable lyric ballet *The Wise Virgins*. Frederick Ashton's choreographic development has been delightful to watch, but till the war one never guessed what depth and beauty of perception lay below his nimble wit and accomplished sense of decorative movement. Margot Fonteyn danced an important part in each of the three ballets and was excellent in all.

"Boys in Brown," at the Gate

Mr. Reginald Beckwith's play about Borstal is skilfully written to touch off the major faults of this particular conception of penal reform without painting it all black. The Young Boy is sufficiently *decent* in a public school sense to respond to the esprit de corps on which the institution is run. Being sixteen, an athlete and susceptible he would, given luck, have got along pretty well under the influence of the well-intentioned masters and the nicer of his seniors. His corruption begins from association with young men in their twenties whose contempt for "decency" is absolute and whose wits are much sharper than his own. His downfall is completed by a dramatic realisation that a Borstal boy—in spite of what the kindly authorities tell him—is marked for life. Borstal is, in fact, a prison, and its stain is irremovable. The plot was well contrived to illustrate this thesis, and the atmosphere was convincingly created. It was a pity perhaps, considering the moment, that the play did not cut a little deeper. The point surely is that decency is not enough; it may be nicer than brutality but one cannot help sympathising with brutality's contempt for it. We must summon a tougher kind of virtue if we are to save ourselves. On June 17th one was conscious of that necessity all round one and so felt inclined to discount the moral of the play; after all, Borstal is preferable to a concentration camp. However this was an accident of the times and hardly fair to an author who had provided a stimulating evening's entertainment and to the actors, especially John Carol (as a kind of Borstal Iago), Derek Blomfield (as the Young Boy), Philip Fox and Julian Somers.

"Primrose Path," at the Gaumont, Haymarket
"Gaslight," at the Odeon

Primrose Path is nearly a very good film. It has a background—the shanty life of the poor, revealed once with desolating beauty in the photographs of Walker Evans; it has real characters and not merely film stars stuck on a setting; it has, above all, Ginger Rogers, who since her dancing days has proved herself a first-rate actress. Here we see her as a tomboy grown up in a household where to be a "good girl" means letting the children go hungry and meeting the unspoken reproaches of her elders. Her mother still has the looks and easy nature which can extract dollars from business men in search of a gay time; it will be her turn next. She flings out, suddenly, into marriage with a café barman (Joel Macrea); but a few quarrels and a meeting with her family (a sentimental drunken father and a slave-driving old trollop of a grandmother complete the picture), break up the marriage, and she has reached the point of walking the streets herself, when there are reconciliations all round and things end happily. All that is wrong with the film is that happy ending and the false touches which have had to be introduced to lead up to it. Happy endings are perhaps inevitable in the minds of Hollywood producers, but here the pull of the story is so overwhelmingly, so convincingly the other way that for once we feel, realism might have been allowed to triumph. The merit of the film is that, despite this, there is no sentimentality about prostitution. The kitchen where the family takes its meals, and a fox fur hangs beside a peeling wallpaper, bores its way in our minds; and the backchat conjures up a whole landscape of crazy dwellings, petrol pumps and fields along a derelict shore. In case this sounds merely depressing, there is always Ginger Rogers, who acts with remarkable freshness and vigour.

Gaslight is an English film based on Patrick Hamilton's thriller and here again it is atmosphere rather than incident that counts. Mid-Victorian London with its fogs, muffin-men, horse-buses and top-hatted police has been revived in delightful detail. The best moments of the film are really the family prayers at breakfast (the two servants kneeling in a corner with their backs to the table), and the music-hall with its greasy compére and frothy girls dancing the can-can. The story of a murderer (Anton Walbrook) who is systematically driving his wife mad so that she shall not give evidence against him is successfully eerie, though Diana Wynyard as the wife seems more at a loss than she is meant to be.

"Thunder Rock," at the Neighbourhood Theatre, 38, Harrington Road, S.W.7

Anyone who is interested not merely in the theatre but in values generally at this time should pay a visit to this play. *Thunder Rock* comes from New York, where it was first produced by the American Group Theatre; it is extremely well acted and produced and could hardly be more relevant to the moment without being unbearably topical. If, as an idea, it has the faults of popular front leftism—over simplification and a too facile solution—it has also the enthusiasm, the vitality and the faith which we badly need. Its main character is a big-shot reporter who, sickened by years of reporting European disaster, imitates T. E. Lawrence and becomes a lighthouse keeper on Lake Michigan. In this solitude he creates a private world around the victims of a shipwreck on the lake ninety years earlier; the characters of his fancy come to life and their stories convince him of the folly of his attempted escapism. Such a summary may make the plot sound a little ridiculous. But, except in one particular, the treatment saves it from any absurdity and the excellent direction of Mr. Herbert Marshall makes the fantasy credible. To start a new theatre group at this time of day requires courage. The directors and backers deserve every encouragement and every success. There is nothing arty or pretentious about the enterprise, if we may judge from this production, and they have assembled a group of intelligent capable actors. On this occasion Mr. Michael Redgrave is the guest artist and plays the reporter with his usual understanding and polish. The Neighbourhood Theatre is only a hundred yards from South Kensington Station

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, June 22nd—
"The Trojan Women," Tavistock Little Theatre, 7.30.

SUNDAY, June 23rd—
Dr. K. Mannheim: "A Diagnosis of Our Time," Conway Hall, 11.

MONDAY, June 24th—
"Protect Your Homes," an A.R.P. Exhibition, Housing Centre, 13 Suffolk Street, S.W.1. Till July 12th.
Ham Djang Liem: "The War in the Far East," 12 Gt. Newport Street, 7.45.
Reg. Bishop: "What Will Russia Do?" 2 Keats Grove, N.W.3, 8r
Andrew Campbell: "The Economics of Reconstruction," Dick Sheppard Centre, 8.

TUESDAY, June 25th—
A. V. S. Lockhead: "Industrial Welfare in Wartime," Housing Centre, 1.
Marjorie Gullan: "The Poets and the World Situation," Friends' House, 1.20.
Festival of English and French Music, Ninon Vallin and Zino Francescatti, Queen's Hall, 8.

WEDNESDAY, June 26th—
Fork Luncheon, M. André Maurois: "France at War," Overseas League, 1. Tickets (in advance) 2s. 6d.
Festival of English and French Music, National Gallery, 8. And on June 28th.

THURSDAY, June 27th—
Meeting of The People and Freedom Group, "France and Christendom." Speakers: Rev. S. J. Gosling, Prof. Denis Saurat, Mr. Wickham Steed. French Institute, 6.
Barbara Wootton: "The War and After—the Place of the Individual," Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute, 8.

FRIDAY, June 28th—
Prof. J. D. Bernal: "M. V. Lomonosov, the first Russian Scientist," Ambassadors' Hotel, Woburn Place, 7.30.

Correspondence

RECRIMINATIONS

SIR,—I join with you in asking why criticism of the *retention* of persons of proved incompetence in high and responsible positions is said in some quarters to be a mere recrimination about the *past*.

46 Gordon Square, Bloomsbury. J. M. KEYNES

THE DEFENCE OF BRITAIN

SIR,—It was with genuine relief that I read your article, "The Defence of Britain," and the brave words in defence of anti-Nazi Germans living in England. You can hardly imagine what discouragement and depression all that alien-baiting, in which part of the press has indulged lately, produces in men who have always believed in something like democratic solidarity. This is not a question of the personal well-being of a few thousand refugees. It is a question of honour and of common sense. It is deeply regrettable that even the *Daily Herald* thought fit to encourage the suspicion that sees a Fifth Columnist in every alien and to extend it to men who have risked their lives and their freedom in illegal work against the Nazi régime. On May 17th the paper triumphantly informed its readers of a "Secret Swoop on 30,000 Germans." On the same day it announced a "hunt" of aliens working in the A.R.P. The result of the "hunt" has never been published. If it had, the public would have learnt that a few dozen Jewish refugees, in patriotic zeal and obeying directions from their Relief Committees had enlisted for A.R.P. work. On May 31st,

the *Daily Herald* quoted Sir Neville Bland's notorious broadcast under the commendatory heading "Don't trust a German."

All refugees, irrespective of political faith and race, including those who have been hitherto recognised as friendly aliens, are made to suffer by these unfair generalisations. Men who have registered for services extremely important for the prosecution of the war, farm workers, tree fellers, and the like, are faced with serious difficulties as soon as they want to take up some job. Others among my friends, who are doing their duty as soldiers in one of the Allied armies, must fear that one day the families whom they have left in England will be treated as Fifth Columnists.

May I be allowed to evoke a reminiscence of days not too long past and a situation very similar to the present? After the occupation of Austria, Czechoslovakia was in mortal peril, a peril far greater even than the danger threatening Great Britain to-day. Encircled on three sides by Germany, bordering with Hungary on the fourth, with a population of 15 millions, she had a Fifth Column within her frontiers that numbered three and a half million Henlein followers and Hungarian irredentists. The number of exiles in Czechoslovakia was comparatively higher than that of refugees in Great Britain to-day. And in spite of all this, the country kept free from "alieno-phobia" before the days of Munich. The authorities and the population were capable of distinguishing between friends and enemies. In the Sudeten areas 15 per cent. of the population were Germans loyal to the Republic, and 85 per cent. were "Fifth Columnists," who received material support from Germany and moral support from certain circles in the Western countries. In spite of that, the small party which I had the honour to lead protected its exiled friends from Germany and Austria against any kind of persecution and supported their illegal anti-Nazi activity. We satisfied the authorities and the democratic public of the reliability of the refugees whom we knew by assuming responsibility for them, and we even issued identity cards for them, signed by the Secretary-General of the Party, in order to protect them from unpleasant incidents.

With this memory still fresh in our minds it is with bitter feelings that we see a democratic country lock up in internment camps large numbers of Austrians and Germans who have devoted their lives to the struggle for freedom and human rights, together with real Nazis. The knowledge that a few thousand refugees were residing in their country did not prevent the democratic population of Czechoslovakia from doing their duty with calmness and resolution, until the fateful hour of Munich struck.

In my mind, a country's honour is involved in the way in which it treats its guests, who are also its allies, and the methods it adopts in this matter are also a measure of its confidence in itself.

WENZEL JAKSCH
London Representative of the Sudeten German Social Democratic Party,
16 Laurel Gardens,
London, N.W.7.

SIR,—The author of the article you published last week under this title sets forth the essential conditions for harnessing and releasing what Prof. Laski has called "the dynamic of democracy."

So far we have entrusted the organisation of our man-power, our munitions and our Civil Defence to the inspiration and direction of Whitehall and the multitudinous *ad hoc* departments if has created since the war began.

This process, far from releasing "the dynamic of democracy" has resulted in a degree of over-centralisation, which has reduced to impotence and stagnation the well-tried democratic machinery which Local Authorities possessed. Moreover, it has brought us perilously near to losing the war.

There may be a case for rigorous central control in the organisation of man-power and munitions, but it is worse than useless for the organisation of Civil Defence and for coping with the problems with which the war confronts the ordinary citizen.

Unfortunately, the Home Office seems less concerned to help in the solution of these problems than to build up a large and costly organisation responsible, through the various Chief Constables, to the Minister for Home Defence and entirely independent of the Local Authorities.

If this process is allowed to develop during the war, it is difficult to see how democratic government can survive. The duties and responsibilities of Local Authorities will inevitably be absorbed by a centrally controlled bureaucracy similar to those existing in the totalitarian states.

16 Royal Park, Bristol, 8. R. ST. JOHN READE
Member of Bristol City Council.

SIR,—Now that we have witnessed with sorrow and dismay the overrunning of our ally, France, by a well-equipped and well-organised army, the Government tells us that we are to fight it out to the end in this country.

Before facing the terrible prospect of general slaughter and destruction which this decision entails, the Government should for their part give the public some evidence, other than vaguely optimistic speeches, on which a realistic view can be taken of the chances of eventual victory.

All of us are ready to endure, if we can be assured that our Ministers are basing their hopes on real determination and not on "miracles."

Therefore, before the British public is committed to battle, many of us would welcome satisfactory answers to the following questions:

1. Are all those in key positions who are known to have failed, to be removed once and for ever—not merely transferred to other posts, but finally dismissed, so that they can meddle no longer?

2. Is the refugee problem, which so largely contributed to the military defeat of Belgium and France, to be dealt with in a decisive way (i.e. certain areas cleared compulsorily of all persons likely to hinder military operations)?

3. Can we produce sufficient war essentials and do we possess sufficient food stocks to stand a long siege (without relying on problematical deliveries from the U.S.A.)?

Satisfactory assurances on these points would go far to infuse our civilians with fresh courage, and enable them to "go to it" in the grim days which lie ahead.

At the moment, the Government is drawing a heavy cheque on the country, without informing us how it is to be met.

28 Coram Street, W.C.1. L. WILLIAMSON

THE L.D.V.s

SIR,—I joined the Local Defence Volunteers soon after the first appeals. After doing two parades I was informed—on presenting myself for patrol duty on the third occasion—that I was unacceptable because I was a communist. On making further inquiries as to the reasons for my rejection I was referred to the Police—from whom I received evasive replies.

The facts are, that I am the Labour Party Agent in this city and a local councillor. Many years ago I was connected with the communists, but, during the past ten years I have, more often than not, found myself in violent disagreement with them.

One socialist paper has reported that there is a ban against the acceptance of militant workers in the L.D.V. My experience lends credence to this view—particularly as, at the moment, I am engaged, along with others, in leading local Council House tenants in a strike against rent proposals that can only be described as monstrous.

Meanwhile, with four years' military experience (T.A.) I am turned down from the L.D.V., whilst recruits are taken who have never before seen a rifle. Needless to say the True Blue School are well to the fore as L.D.V. officers and the British Empire is being preserved. J. E. WALSH

111 Tuffley Avenue,
Gloucester.

[We have heard of other similar cases of men being rejected because they are not politically all that some local big-wig thinks they ought to be. We refer to this subject in our leading article.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

REFUGEES

SIR,—I gather from a letter by Mr. E. A. Pauley in your last issue that he was twice taken to a police station and examined because his beard aroused the suspicion of foreign origin. This reminds me of similar incidents in German towns when war broke out in 1914. People with full beards were frequently suspected of being "Russian spies," and manhandled by the mob. Many Germans obviously believed that all Russians wore long beards, like Tolstoi, and the conclusion was drawn that bearded men must be Russians.

This conclusion was no more illogical than that of many people in this country to-day, in whose eyes every German or Austrian refugee is suspected of being a spy because he came to England with a German or Austrian passport. Nazis have such passports, they conclude, and every holder of such a passport, therefore, must be a Nazi. They seem to have no inkling of what the refugees have suffered, and that they have even more reason to hate the Nazis than the average Englishman. Frequently, however, the same people who now raise the hue and cry against refugees formerly accused them of being too hostile to Hitler.

The drive against the refugees is constantly fostered by influential papers, particularly by sensationally made-up reports of refugees who have infringed black-out regulations, etc. But almost no publicity was given to the Home Office statement in the House of Commons on May 29th. Under-Secretary Mr. Peake declared that he could not recall any case of anything that could be described as a hostile act having been proved in a court of law to be attributable to either German or Austrian internees. If there is no evidence against people who have been interned, it must be assumed that there is still less ground of suspicion against those who have not been interned.

Yet many thousands of refugees have been dismissed or even interned, among them hosts of nurses and workers in war industries, and also scientific experts of unique experience. Large numbers of policemen, soldiers, and others are kept busy with rounding-up, checking or guarding refugees. Many businesses have been ruined which depended upon refugees, and new burdens have been laid on the taxpayer.

London. ERASMUS HERDER

WOMAN-POWER

SIR,—I welcomed warmly Miss Eleanor Rathbone's article in your issue of June 15th, as it expressed in such a clear manner the views of so many women of the country at this juncture.

The Government is subjecting the women of the nation to the greatest possible strain by compelling them to be practically useless. Day after day goes by with its tale of retreat for lack of supply and yet women are without war work.

If the departments concerned are too busy, why not give women the authority to do preliminary planning to make a complete survey of the field and to inaugurate mass training at once?

Well-known business women offer their spare time to assist in the scheme. They have asked since the beginning of the war that plans should be ahead of the need, but still nothing is done. The British Federation of Business and Professional Women, which represents some 64,000 qualified and trained women, is urging the Government to make use of its services.

I hope that the efforts of your paper and others will be effective with regard to the use of the services of skilled business and professional women before it is too late. CAROLINE HASLETT,
British Federation of Business and Professional Women, Chairman
20 Regent Street,

CHRISTIAN VERSE

SIR,—Mr. Peach would be wise, before animadverting so strongly against my views, to acquaint himself with them more fully. If he will read my introduction to the *Oxford Book of Christian Verse* he will see that I never said that Christian Verse should be High Anglican or Roman to attain eternal merit; that, so far from violently attacking the Protestant Verses of the eighteenth century, I singled them out for special praise especially the hymns of Watts and Wesley; that my praise of many Protestant poets indicates that I do not think protestantism antipathetic to poetry. I should like to add that I am not an Armenian.

New College, Oxford. DAVID CECIL

[We apologise for an absurd misprint. Mr. Peach wrote Arminian.—ED. *N.S.&N.*]

TRIBUNALS

SIR,—In totalitarian countries there are, officially, no pacifists. In Great Britain the pacifist is recognised by the State and expensive legal machinery has been set up so that the pacifist can establish his conscientious objection to active or direct participation in the war.

It is not to be expected that this machinery, which is, after all, human and liable to be shaken by

the emotional stresses that at certain periods of history dominate mankind, should function perfectly and therefore inhumanly, but surely the legal mind is one that can subjugate emotion to reason.

On Tuesday last my son appeared before the Leeds Tribunal. His pacifist record was not disputed. He was a member of the No More War Movement, and automatically became a member of the P.P.U. when the two movements merged. He is an active pacifist, is saturated with facts and figures—has spoken in public, taken part in poster parades, and engages in any pacifist activities that are still possible. It must be remembered that such activities are not yet forbidden by the State.

In the course of a very short and irrelevant cross-examination the Judge asked:

"Do you wish this country to lose the war?" To this my son replied: "I do not wish either side to be defeated."

"That is not answering my question. Do you want this country to win the war?"

"I do not wish this country to *win* the war, sir," was the reply.

In a flash Judge Stewart turned to the Court and said "This man has the mind of a traitor." My son attempted to speak; he wished to point out that the pacifist fears that victory by either side will be the prelude to a vindictive peace policy, but the Judge angrily ordered him to be silent. My son respectfully once more asked to be heard, but the attempt was useless, and, refusing to listen further to the insults of an almost incoherently angry Judge, he left the Court.

The whole thing was a sheer mockery and was not made better by newspaper reports headed "The mind of a traitor," and which quoted Judge Stewart as saying "Steps will be taken to deal with a man who speaks like a traitor in this Court." These reports have been a grief to my husband, who knows the utter sincerity of my son, but who, along with five volunteer brothers, fought in the infantry in the last war when three were killed and two wounded—my husband being wounded twice.

If this were the only case of injustice I would not trouble you with this letter.

No pacifist worth his salt is afraid to suffer for his convictions, but a travesty of justice is unworthy of Great Britain and an insult not only to the pacifist but to all concerned.

39 Nab Lane, MARGERY SOUTH
Shipley.

CAMBRIDGE WOMEN'S AMBULANCE

SIR,—The five women's Societies in the University of Oxford have raised within a week the £550 required to equip a Red Cross Ambulance, and are collecting for a second. We appeal to past members of the two women's Colleges in Cambridge to equal this. Gifts should be sent to the Treasurer, Red Cross Ambulance Fund, in each College, as quickly as possible; the latest date desirable being July 6th.

H. M. WODEHOUSE, Mistress of Girton College, Cambridge
J. P. STRACHEY, Principal of Newnham College, Cambridge
PAULINE K. LEVESON, Registrar of Girton College Roll
HELEN E. PALMER, Registrar of Newnham College Roll

Cambridge.

TOTAL WAR

SIR,—How the expression "total war" came into use I do not know, but it suggests a question.

Does it mean that all scruples are to be abandoned, and that fear and hatred are to do their worst? Or does it mean that this is a war in which the entire nation is implicated, a war out of which shall come good for every nation, a war by which man's whole nature may be restored, purged through terror and pity? The only holy way in history?

I believe it can be either, and as one of the awkward people who at first felt that the best way to serve one's country was to keep clear of the war machine and continue the building of peaceful community in microcosm, I appeal to all who still hold this view to reconsider it in the light of recent developments. Surely the danger of an easy win and a self-righteous peace, at any rate on our side, is over. The spirit which saw totalitarianism as black against the white of *status quo* is dying. The old order has crashed: *laisser faire* is in its grave. The new order is being born, for better for worse. For better for worse. Must we accept the stunted totalitarianisms we know, with their predilections of race or class, and their ruthless destruction of heretics, as true to type? Or can Britain, in her hour of agony, bring forth a community life which is truly totalitarian, in which all human values are fulfilled?

I believe this depends largely on the minorities. Neutrality at this moment is a myth: non-co-operation is enmity. If we can be content to lose our group lives and throw ourselves into the national unity, not abandoning our enthusiasms but taking them in with us, may we not have a community in which coercion is unnecessary and propaganda superfluous because we are all agreed, and whose motive is so much stronger than hate or fear that it will perform miracles and can conquer even in defeat? The glory of this old world of ours is that tragedy can become triumph.

The guilt of war is upon all alike, pacifist and militarist, Communist and Conservative. Can we stand out from the horror and the suffering? If we fail to live our faith in community now, as we failed to live it in the years of peace, shall we not wake some day to find the city of our dreams built out of long agony, while we slept, by those who said "I go not"? MARGARET CORKE

Riverside,
Parkgate, Cheshire.

PRAYER

SIR,—Since Mr. Tatum asks me the direct question why no "Dunkirk deliverance" was wrought for other countries in answer to their prayers, may I attempt to give through your columns a reply?

Both experience and reason show that no prayer will be so answered as either to over-rule man's freewill—or he would cease to be man—or to save him from the direct and immediate consequences of his own acts—or why should he care what he does?

If man chooses to use his free will to fill the air with flying bits of metal, many will get hurt, nor will prayer avert that inevitable consequence. If we had had no navy or air force, prayer would not have saved our men from the consequences of such neglect—though I do not remember that the broadcast of May 29th seemed to place much reliance on either navy or air force. So again if ten attack one, or a very big nation attacks a very small one, prayer will not produce an evident and immediate miracle. If prayer produced miracles so easily, how fervent we should be upon our knees and how strange a world that would be from which law had fled for miracle to rule instead. In short, prayer is not magic.

Nevertheless that there is often to be seen an apparent relation between prayer and event is quite simply a "brute fact," like that other relationship between cause and effect which David Hume so long ago showed to be a mere illusion, with no foundation in logic or common sense. E. R. PUNSHON

23 Nimrod Road,
Streatham Park, London, S.W.16.

SIR,—Our Days of Prayer having up to the present been attended with such marked results for the nations concerned, I venture, in the greatest respect, to suggest that the Archbishops should now hurry up with a special Day of Intercession for Germany and for Italy. M. BISHOP

Padgate, Warrington.
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SIR,—The Rev. C. P. Goslin says that "in prayer we seek to realise the Will of God in any given situation and to bring our own wills into line with His Will." But how can we discover what the Will of God is? As an example of the difficulty take the Church's attitude to war. From one pulpit we are told that God has willed the war as a punishment for our sins (especially for the sin of non-churchgoing). From another that war is contrary to God's Will and is caused by the misuse of man's free will. Personally, I have found relief from this and other religious paradoxes which had become intolerable for me in the study of Spinoza and his philosophical descendants, among whom, incidentally, is Robert Blatchford, whose books, *Not Guilty* and *God and My Neighbour*, deserve resurrection. E. V. MILNER

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IT was Dr. Johnson who said he rejoiced to concur with the common reader. The constant reader is another matter. You cannot concur with him. You can only compete. You can only wait for him to stop as you wait for a friend to finish telling you about his operations and illnesses so that you can get a word in about your own. For constant reading is a kind of invalidism, a state of brilliant recurring fevers, stupefied surfeits and flat-mouthed relapses. Exalted, garrulous, cunning, fanatical often and even a little daft, the bookish exchange their boasts, their temperatures and the story of their symptoms, as they sniff at each other's shelves. Now, they exclaim with some smugness at what they have already read; farther on they drop into silence and cringe in awful despair before what they have not. A stab from the unread Spenser, a sneer from the Icelandic Sagas; derision from Lecky, the reproach of Buckle, the philosophers in chorus muttering, "Here was the truth, but you were too busy—'Lord I have a house.'" The gravestones of the bookish bear this epitaph in invisible ink: "Driven to hopelessness and death by the outcry of the books he had not read."

Mr. E. E. Kellett's *Ex-Libris or Confessions of a Constant Reader* (Allen and Unwin, 8s. 6d.) suggests such reflections. It sets out to be Mr. Kellett's mental autobiography, to make a portrait of himself in terms of the books he has read. But this it does not really do, unless one is to make the unkind assumption that Mr. Kellett is no more than an astonishing reading machine. It is true that he is a memory rather than a sensibility, a man of knowledge more noticeably than a man of feeling. He has crammed, but he has crammed with gusto and it has cleared his mind and his style. By the time he left Oxford he had read everything a young man ought to have read. It is almost appalling. You cannot catch him anywhere. The *Faerie Queene*? He was reading it rapturously and secretly in the school dormitory at the age of fourteen and wishing it were longer! The *Ring and the Book*? Still in his teens, he was lapping it up, this time (it is true) wishing it were shorter. Dante, the *Iliad*, and Milton belong to this earlier period, for youth is the time for epics; if you don't read them before you are twenty it is unlikely you will ever read them. In history and morals, he heard the full liberal diapason from Green, Gibbon and Lecky to Buckle and the *Golden Bough*; and easily fitted in all the English poets, novelists and dramatists, most of the French, some of the German. Moreover, to show he was no prig of learning, he could be as undiscriminating as the majority of us. He fell for all the best-sellers. He has his word for Edna Lyall and Ouida, as in earlier years he had sandwiched Longfellow, the *Iliad* and St. Winifred's. This is merely the beginning; most bookish people could produce a list as freakishly diverse and portentous—since we are showing off, I remember running Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* and Talbot Baines Reed very happily together at twelve—but not many can keep up this gorging beyond their youth.

There seem to be two main kinds of bookishness. One might call them the Catholic and the Protestant, the hedonist and the zealous. Mr. Kellett's is the Protestant kind. His is not the pocket-bulging, home-ruining, wife-neglecting, mind-addling inebriation by print, which fills the imagination with Dulcineas and the eyes with dust. He does not (like that greasy bookworm in *Le Chat Maigre*) lie on the cobwebbed bed whose sheets are smeared with tobacco ash, while around him the volumes mount up the walls and the windows and his notes have to be written on the wall, where they are punctuated by the ghastly revelations of the charlady's pencil: Je reviendrai lundi pour le linge sale. The latinity is not lousy. Mr. Kellett represents the opposite and evangelical tradition—the one I, too, best understand—the brisk exhilaration of reading to obtain knowledge because it is virtuous to obtain it. Brought up in the energising atmosphere of Victorian evangelical piety which saw learning and the light as one, he would find no incongruity in having Byron's *Don Juan* and *Jessica's First Prayer* almost on the same shelf, united by the sacred Mystery of printed information. There was a moral zest in print which enhanced Mr. Kellett's pleasure:

> I suppose it was example that made us read, for my father was an absolutely insatiable reader, and my mother, who had as much cultivation as it was easy for early Victorian girls to acquire, read not only while knitting but in every interval of her ceaseless work, and never failed to impress on us all that books were good things. Once, at eight years old, I was deep in Rollin's *Ancient History*, and landed on some dull pages. "Is all this any use?" I asked her. "All knowledge is useful," she said.

There was a very large number of such families in Victorian times and especially among the progressively and evangelically minded, where the virtue of reading was stressed, where reading aloud was practised and family literary criticism was a pastime. Mr. Kellett's father used to correct Dr. Johnson's couplets. Since then the impetus of virtue—which had the merit of making people read while they were young when the appeal to virtue is strongest—has gone out of reading. The aim of our generation has been, I suppose, to produce fulfilled persons and not virtuous ones. How much of the Victorian preoccupation with goodness strikes us as day-dreaming, an opium vision which would distract the eye from a lucid view of colonial expansions, native wars, the seamy industrial towns, and that apparently irrepressible Victorian desire to marry one's deceased wife's sister. The Victorian passion for goodness seems to us not merely a passion for certain conventional forms of goodness, but also the fantasy of people who have become unbalanced by their aggressiveness and expansions. For this reason one reads the novelists and poets of the time most happily in one's own most egotistical and day-dreaming years.

But one of the mistakes we are apt to make about Victorian childhood, Mr. Kellett reminds us, is to think that this apparently heavy air of instructive piety suffocated the child. Large numbers of children were not made unhappy by this atmosphere. Piety and halos, faked or genuine, are attractive up to the twenties; youth is the hey-day of virtue, the time when it is a delight to repress the desires. In Mr. Kellett's family there were "Sunday books." *Tom Brown's Schooldays* was forbidden on Sundays because of the fights—I am glad to see Mr. Kellett used to object to bloodshed in the *Iliad* and to the partiality of the gods; this offended my Nonconformist conscience, too—but there were the pugnacious pleasures of *The Christian Soldier or Heaven Taken by Storm*, or the *Memoirs of Captain Hedley Vicars*, the story of a converted sinner, with quite a lively proportion of sin to conversion in the narrative. It is the happy peculiarity of piety to be especially concerned with its opposite, and this fact alone made a good deal of popular religious family reading lurid and adventurous for the young, and pleasantly if unconsciously erotic for the older.

Having got his pleasure from knowledge, Mr. Kellett is better at describing his knowledge than his pleasure. His comments by way of criticism or appreciation on his vast reading are terse but conventional. The thing he does well is to stand up for the commonplace or derided, like Longfellow, because they have given the young a grounding which otherwise they might not have had. A schoolmaster's view, but worth stating. He is good at adding to other people's quotations—again the schoolmaster—as in this example from Coleridge:

> Every man is either a Platonist or an Aristotelian; but it is possible for any man to be the one to-day and the other to-morrow.

Which is only too true. On the novelists I found him disappointing, except on two points. I am glad he regards *Wuthering Heights* as promising but crude and immature; and there is an ingenious minor criticism of Henry James. James, he says, like all the psychological novelists, slows up the speed of life. By aiming at essential things and making an action like opening a door take up several pages, they miss the essential thing about opening a door, which is its suddenness and speed. It would be terrifying to have Mr. Kellett's sharp and instructed eye travelling over and marking one's page.

V. S. PRITCHETT

A MAN OF STEEL

Sidney Gilchrist Thomas. By LILIAN GILCHRIST THOMPSON. *Faber and Faber.* 12s. 6d.

Some time ago I reviewed Ivor Thomas's admirable biography of David Davies, railway constructor and coal-magnate, which was published under the title *Top Sawyer*. David Davies was the type of the early Victorian industrialist, crude, unlettered, deeply religious, who was swept to affluence on the tide of capitalist expansion. He succeeded not because he understood the scientific or social processes of his age but because when Britain was the workshop of the world, money made itself in the hands of shrewd adventurous men.

The life of Sidney Gilchrist Thomas personified the steel age as David Davies personified that of coal and iron: and his sister's biography of him is the perfect companion volume to *Top Sawyer*. When Thomas began to earn his living at the age of 17, in 1867, the first inevitable expansion had finished. To maintain its lead over foreign industries, Britain needed scientific researchers and a new type of business executive. To rise to the top, an Englishman has to enjoy not merely good luck and good sense but an understanding of the age in which he lived. Having made his fortune in the previous epoch David Davies could enlarge it in the '80s; had he been the same age as Gilchrist Thomas, he might have remained a labourer all his life.

Sidney Gilchrist Thomas was the son of a Somerset House official. His father died young and it was his mother, Millicent Gilchrist Thomas, who brought up a family of brilliant children, dominated them to the end of her life, and gave them their Liberal faith. From Dulwich he would have won a University scholarship and studied medicine if his father had not died when he was 17. This forced him to look for a job at once, and he became a clerk at the Thames Police Court with a salary of £90 a year rising to £200. This post he held for 12 years until in 1879 his position in the steel world was established. In the first eight years, though he was paying his share of household expenses, he saved £800.

All the research work therefore which was to result in the Gilchrist Thomas process was done after a 10-hour working day in the courts, and some of the early experiments were actually conducted in the domestic grate. Finally, at a meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute in March 1878, a young police court clerk an-

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nounced to an incredulous assembly of experts that he had discovered how to remove phosphorus entirely by the Bessemer converter. The new steel age had begun and Gilchrist Thomas, at the age of 28, was its creator.

The problem he had set himself in his leisure hours was extremely practical. The new Bessemer Process of steel production had one tremendous defect, it could not be applied to phosphoric ores. This meant that in Europe only the Spanish and Swedish iron-mines could be used. The British, Belgian, French and German were virtually useless for steel production. The man who showed how to remove phosphorus by the Bessemer converter would not only cheapen steel production; he would change the balance of empires. By utilising the phosphoric ores of the Saar, Luxembourg and Lorraine, Germany would become the greatest steel producer and military power in Europe. And incidentally the phosphoric slag would provide a new and valuable form of chemical manure. Though Gilchrist benefited Middlesbrough by enabling it to use Cleveland ore, the German debt to his discovery was far greater.

But that was all far ahead. In 1871 Gilchrist Thomas began reading all he could about mines and studying at Birkbeck College; soon he had taken his examinations at the School of Mines and was studying advanced chemistry. Every holiday was spent travelling in mining areas at home and abroad and he was able to make a little money by technical journalism. Meanwhile experience in the police court made him a radical, later to become an ardent supporter of Henry George and temperance reform. But he was not a mere intellectual or reformer. Determined that his discoveries should not be exploited by others, he mastered the Patent Law and built up a fighting fund as a precaution against legal dangers. All his life, his zeal for economy was almost a mania—under-nourishment contributed to his early death—and was matched by an intense appreciation of power. When he first thought about dephosphorisation in 1870 he stressed to his teacher "what would be the product of a royalty of sixpence a ton on three million tons annually of Cleveland pig-iron"; when he visited Mont Blanc he wrote to his mother: "The superfluous water-power torments me." It is this strange mixture of motives which makes him characteristic of his age, the passion for science as a means to power, the daring and caution of the business executive and the shrewd speculative investor, the social conscience determined, when once a vast fortune has been made, to find a new outlet for ambition in social planning, and lastly the inability to entrust to others any real control of his varied enterprises. In the 'nineties, the peak of this second capitalist phase, research, management and ownership could be centred in one man: later, in our epoch, they would be divorced from one another as capitalism petrified into the soulless corporation.

Miss Gilchrist Thompson has written a book for the discerning reader. She lets her brother's letters tell their own story. We see the police court clerk at his desk scribbling suggestions for new experiments, in Saxony studying ancient systems of mining, or later touring the Empire with one eye on capitalist chances and the other on the native question. Her own life has been spent in the service of her brother who died so many years ago leaving her £300 a year for life and the control of a vast fortune to be spent "doing good." "I have done this," he wrote, "because I know I can rely on you implicitly to do what I wish under all circumstances, to be in fact as honest to your dead brother as if he were alive."

A man with all the hard thrust of the metal which he lived and died for.

RICHARD COVENTRY

NEW NOVELS

Illusion in Java. By GENE FOWLER. *Dent.* 8*s.*

Nuns in Jeopardy. By MARTIN BOYD. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Hester Roon. By NORAH LOFTS. *Peter Davies.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Champlain Road. By FRANKLIN DAVEY MCDOWELL. *Macmillan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Dr. Addams. By IRVING FINEMAN. *Cresset Press.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Miltonic opinion that it is better to rule in hell than serve in heaven has not commended itself to literary criticism, and a book is judged usually by its rank in the peerage of letters rather than by its place amongst its peers. We are, as a rule, so impressed by moral or physical bulk that the bad but ambitious is placed above the slight but brilliant, the tawdry panorama impresses more than the perfect vignette, and the worst of Tolstoi is treated with greater respect than the best of Logan Pearsall Smith. The great have disciples enough to defend them, and it is chiefly the lesser writers who suffer from the full blast of this *snobisme de grandeur*. Of the five novels here reviewed, one (150,000 words) must be, and has been, called an Epic of Civilisation struggling with Barbarism, and another (175,000 words) coyly claims to reconcile Intellect, Passion, and Society. The remaining three (about 250,000 words between them) are unashamedly slight in the broadest sense of the word, and give us no sort of help in our presumably incessant struggles with our souls and the universe. In style and intelligence the latter novels are in all respects superior to the former, yet because they are less pretentious will receive a far quieter recognition. To none of them will the Governor General grant his Annual Literary Award; it is extremely unlikely that any of them will be described as "well nigh ecstatic with poetic vision"; I do not believe that any of their characters will be hailed as the most unusual in modern fiction. Yet, all the same, critical language and outlook have become so corrupt that restrained approval constantly slips into implied condemnation, and the very terms with which we flatter the light and accomplished have in them a tincture of contempt. In our hearts, I am afraid, we like something big for our money, and find it difficult not to despise the epigram and the intaglio. One sometimes suspects that beneath all its carefully cultivated taste the aesthetic of the age looks not to the poised proportion of classic or renaissance, but to the ten-ton man-faced bulls of panchromatic Nineveh.

Illusion in Java is an anthropological fairy-tale that should delight everyone who is excited by lantern-slides of Bali. Ajoks, a young fellow who in another type of romance would be called a broth of a bhoy, wastes what should be his working days in singing, courting the wicked moneylender's daughter, and playing superbly on the bonan, a musical instrument distantly related to the xylophone. He undergoes good and ill fortune, makes an adventurous journey, falls under the sway of a vampire, meets with most of the troubles traditionally awaiting the feckless young artist, and finally, surmounting all obstacles, becomes a great and honoured musician. As fiction, this is conventional though pleasantly told; and the narration, though coloured and fluent, never rises beyond that of the simple *conte*. The merit of the book lies in its detailed presentation of native custom, and in the clarity with which it throws Javanese social life on the screen. Mr. Fowler sometimes overdoes the dialogue—"The mice have blisters on their feet from looking for food in this house. Ai! Ai!" and similar phrases have a ludicrously bogus ring about them however genuine the idiom may actually be—but for the most part he is carefully convincing; and though his observations are never analytical he gives a very pretty picture of an attractively bizarre way of life. *Illusion in Java* is the more interesting in that it comes from the author of that exuberant (and exuberantly publicised) curiosity *Onward, Trolly!* a book whose noisy and startling humour seems altogether alien to the quiet attractions of the present novel. Mr. Fowler is plainly a master of minor fiction, and it is, perhaps, a pity that he has not turned his talents to the more ponderous themes of the next storey up.

Nuns in Jeopardy happily disappoints the dreary expectations aroused by its title and plot (a party of nuns and sailors cast away on a Pacific Island), and turns out to be an original if somewhat fugitive satire on civilised attitudes to life. The nuns are neither holy nor ridiculous, but well-intentioned commonplace women who have taken the veil in the largely unconscious hope of satisfying various needs for which their previous lives had seemed unlikely to provide. Of the sailors, one is a noble savage, two are ignoble brutes, and the remaining pair belong to the unhappy type of young man that vainly longs for the more ideal relationships of romantic hero-worship. Also of the party is the Devil, disguised as a pedantic Cambridge don, who sees to it that everyone has the chance to fulfil his dearest wish and meet the appropriate retribution for it. Mr. Boyd, as readers of his autobiography will remember, has a clever mind, a sensitive touch, and acute satirical perceptions. Although his present story is tenuous and inconclusive, it is one that in the hands of many writers would have plunged into vulgarism or fatuity. It is a considerable tribute to its author's subtlety and judgment that *Nuns in Jeopardy* is not only inoffensive but also extremely entertaining.

Hester Roon is, like at least two other of its author's books, an historical romance in which an unfortunate victim of circumstances undergoes typical eighteenth-century hardships and is transported to an eventually mitigated slavery in the West Indies. This version of the familiar story is less inchoate than its predecessors; and Hester's adventures as skivvy at an inn and ladies' maid on a plantation have more body, if no greater historical feeling, than those recounted in Miss Lofts' previous books, without losing the coloured lucidity that gives her work its distinctive charm. Strict criticism could demolish *Hester Roon* if only on the grounds that the book wants both first and final causes and has nothing much to say in the middle. Yet though the plot is pointless and the characters unformed, separate incidents of the confused picaresque are told with a dream-like clarity that makes them oddly memorable. Miss Lofts' first promise has remained unfulfilled, but there is a quality to her writing that still offers hope of a sudden and startling development.

An impressive regiment of Canadian critics consider *The Champlain Road* an outstanding contribution not only to the literature of their own country, but also to the whole genre of the historical novel. The background of the book is admittedly of some historical interest, for it attempts to describe the failure of the French Jesuits to establish a Christian Indian kingdom in the seventeenth century; and the author makes great play with the enormous implications that lay in the success of the scheme. Unfortunately, the broad historic issues are obscured by the rough stuff, and what was apparently intended to be a village Gibbon emerges as a flimsy and extraordinarily boring yarn of Missionaries versus Redskins, in which baptisms and martyrdoms alternate with the bloody and platitudinous exploits of a beautiful English girl and a handsome French captain. *The Champlain Road* is, like Canada itself, based on American models. One can say only that Mr. McDowell's book is to the best American epics as Toronto is to New York City.

Dr. Addams is about an authority on spermatazoa who becomes impotent with his wife because of her insincere interest in left wing politics; and is clearly intended mainly for the self-conscious science-snob. Mr. Fineman is ruthlessly (and tirelessly) frank and outspoken about the uterine wall, the right to have a love-child, the electric reactions of the cervix, and the duty of gorgeously natural passion; and has succeeded in combining extensive lectures on electro-osmosis and the theories of Smoluchowski (Krak. Ang. 1903) with equally lengthy passages of embarrassing sexual sentimentality. I recommend this as my five star choice for those who like their curiosa served up sterilised. JOHN MAIR

BEING ALIVE

The Story and the Fable. By EDWIN MUIR. *Harrap.* 11s.

Wales England Wed. By ERNEST RHYS. *Dent.* 15s.

A Goodly Fellowship. By MARY ELLEN CHASE. *Collins.* 8s. 6d.

Contacts and Contrasts. By LADY HELENA GLEICHEN. *John Murray.* 12s. 6d.

More Charlton. By AIR COMMODORE L. E. O. CHARLTON. *Longmans.* 12s. 6d.

The Third and Fourth Generation. By MONTAGU C. ALLWOOD. *Allwood.* 7s. 6d.

Coco the Clown. By Himself. *Dent.* 10s. 6d.

Few people, one would think, could write their autobiographies without showing some awareness of that most dramatic of human situations—the situation of being one person alive at one particular time and place. Living is the art of self-expression in a limited medium—the world of one's time. Within that setting, between life and death, the individual assumes certain shapes, wears a mask and a rank, accepted at their face value by an audience occupied in playing the same game. But behind the mask of achievement there is an ever-unsatisfied need: and who, thinking to write about his life, is not aware of the sense of death? Life itself is the genius; geniuses are those who are especially aware of a sense of life; so one would expect everyone writing about his own life to be inspired for a time with a certain heightened perception of life.

Yet the amazing fact is that almost all those who write autobiographies see themselves not as they are, but as the world sees them. The politician thinks "My speeches"; Coco the Clown thinks "My wonderful adventures as an *artiste* in five continents"; Miss Mary Ellen Chase recites in her first sentence "My mother was my first and always my best teacher"; Mr. C. Allwood dedicates his book to "Our Parents who taught us how to play the game of life according to the rules"; Lady Helena Gleichen recollects her wonderful water-colour drawings of dogs, of "Mrs. Hollings and the Author at work in Hospital on the Italian front," of brave poverty in retirement with a friend at her house called "Hellens"; L. E. O. Charlton dissociates himself from other visitors to Dover.

Is it stupidity or courage that makes these brave attempts, in volume after volume, to keep up appearances? Are the writers trying to spare themselves or are they trying to whitewash their social backgrounds? It is difficult to say, but evasive autobiography is almost as fascinating as that of the writer who lays bare his soul. The daring attempt of Charlton, after so nearly giving himself away in a previous volume, to wriggle bluffly through another three hundred pages describing, in a P. G. Wodehouse prose style, his life in retirement, at Maida Vale, as a guest in Mexico, and at Dover; Mr. Allwood's list of "business axioms" which enabled him to conquer a "nervy" temperament, because, as he discovered, "there can be no real achievement without will power"; his liking for horticulture and his disapproval of the suicidal tendencies of a younger generation; Lady

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Helena Gleichen's adventures among the Italians, her yachting trip with the ex-Empress of France, her attendances at Royal Garden Parties, her love of dogs, her lack of any romantic adventure; all these provide one with exercises in reading between the lines.

Such books may be absorbing, but no book is a good book if one has to read always between the lines. This means that autobiography, the most promising of material, is the most difficult of forms in which to succeed, because it is submitted to the test of a quite extraordinary honesty or of an equally remarkable discrimination which does not just consist in skirting over awkward facts. Only two of these writers pass the test—Mr. Muir and Mr. Rhys. Mr. Muir's book is so much the best of all that the others cannot be compared with it. Only Mr. Rhys's book which is frank, kindly, well written and congenial, comes anywhere near. Mr. Rhys has had an interesting life and he reveals his personality as that of a comparative worldly failure, yet with achievements which would have made a far greater failure justified; a marriage full of understanding, a realism about himself and those around him, a refusal to become commercialised. One cannot read this book without being touched. At the same time, it is a record of a journey from the past of the Welsh mines to the present of a literary success, in which the past is superseded, if not lost, in a world of American Lecture Tours and editions of Everyman's Library.

The Story and the Fable is by far the most interesting book Edwin Muir has written. It is difficult to criticise a work which gives a single-minded impression of integrity. But I might say, perhaps not too fancifully, that Mr. Muir has lived his life in order to write this book; yes, perhaps that is the clue to the title and to the clarity of every page which gives a unity to the most diverse experiences and meetings—making even Mr. Rhys's life seem a string of loosely connected events. All through his life, Edwin Muir has had a quite exceptional awareness of a pattern below the surface of his life—call it what you like, the subconscious or a purpose, or the Fable. He has never deviated from this—though the most anxious pages are where he almost Becomes Something which all the other jostling crowd of autobiographers so eagerly are. Mr. Muir is the son of an Orkney Farmer who "went down" in the world, dragging his family with him. As a young man, he lived in conditions of dreadful and even macabre (when he got a job as a clerk in a bone factory) poverty. Now we all read his reviews in the *Listener* and know his name. A typical little Scotch life, subject of a hundred autobiographies by I.L.P. leaders, writers, business men, etc.! The difference is that one doesn't close his book feeling "Ah, he has done it. He has got somewhere. He has skilfully manoeuvred his past into our present of debates and literary weeklies, without making us uncomfortable." On the contrary, one feels that he still is what he always was. That he has lost nothing of his past and of his childhood, but added to them enormously.

Mr. Muir's method is to regard everything as a spiritual experience within the common human situation of finding oneself alive. His most realistic and even sordid experiences have an intense significance, as though they are taking place in a Hell beyond human understanding. The terrible account of the bone factory, and, equally, the scenes in the slums of Glasgow are pitiful and horrible and mysterious and not beyond redemption. At a time when few people are buying books, I cannot recommend this book too highly. It is surely a book that people will rediscover again and again, for it is the life-work of a man devoted to living a certain kind of truth. STEPHEN SPENDER

WHETHER you use a "cut-throat" or a "safety," you can't do better than stick to Parke-Davis, the shaving cream that both softens the beard and protects the skin. Your chemist sells large 1s. 6d. tubes.

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MILITARY PLANNING

A Key to Victory—A Study in War Planning. By LT.-COL. CLIVE GARSIA. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 10s. 6d.

For the last twenty years the desire of most English people has been to be done with war, to sit back resting on their laurels and be at peace with all men. This psychology has affected the Service as well as other departments. Since 1919 very little of the brains and energy of England has gone into questions of national defence. That would have been excellent if instead of national defence we had organised an international system to prevent war. As we did not, we find ourselves in a catastrophic situation without the military or economic preparation which is necessary to defeat the Nazis. British plutocracy has refused to plan anything in England—our economic system, our defence, our future.

Colonel Garsia is that comparatively rare figure in England—a soldier who has continued to think in time of peace. In comparison with German staff organisation, British staff planning is amateur. Col. Garsia seems for a long time to have been worrying the War Office to listen to his ideas; as one would expect, he has been uniformly turned down. He served on the Staff in Palestine during the last war. In this book he makes important criticisms of the stereotyped technique of British Staff planning and points out that the procedure laid down in 1934 for preparing an "appreciation" of the situation and the consequent plan of action is substantially that of 1909; he then proceeds to a detailed examination of the three battles of Gaza in which the British failed to destroy the Turkish armies when they had a great superiority in the field. Finally he makes concrete proposals for future military planning. He writes at a time when strategic planning has necessarily given way to desperate improvisation. If Colonel Garsia and other soldiers who have thought about war had been listened to earlier some part of our disaster at least might have been prevented. In criticising the failures of our generals in the last war Colonel Garsia makes no personal attacks. He merely illustrates by a particular example the amateur and unimaginative state of mind which has been even more important in civil and social matters than in matters of defence.

Colonel Garsia's criticisms are strongly expressed and to a layman at least they are for the most part convincing. They do not convince Field-Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode, who was himself concerned in two of the battles of Gaza and who writes a foreword to this book. The Field-Marshal points out that "Colonel Garsia was himself on the staff in Palestine, has deeply studied these campaigns and is qualified to put the facts before military students." In saying so much he acquits him of all personal motives and implicitly compares him with others who have severely criticised British leadership in the last war. He writes: "The Carthaginians are said to have crucified an unsuccessful General. Lloyd George contents himself with crucifying the memory of a very gallant gentleman who is dead and cannot answer him." These sentences show how impossible it would be for Colonel Garsia to convince Sir Philip Chetwode and how difficult it must have been for him to win the attention of any of the brass hats in the War Office. The point of the documents produced by Mr. Lloyd George was not to crucify anyone's name. They were a warning of the dangers of the complacent and stereotyped military mind. The career of General Gamelin suggests that the warning was not needless. To Sir Philip Chetwode, to expose the defeats of a general who is dead is in itself a dastardly action. One is not therefore surprised to find that without telling us the reasons why he differs from Colonel Garsia, he is content to say twice over that he does not

" agree with him as regards the First and Third Battles, with the plans for which I had a good deal to do. The Second Battle I had nothing to do with except to object to its taking place at all." He writes: " I recommend his book as a most interesting study, but I am much too old now and much too much of what Liddell Hart calls a bow-and-arrow General to argue it all over again." One of the things that England is wondering to-day is whether the British Army is still being led by less retiring but equally opinionated and obstinate bow-and-arrow generals like Sir Philip Chetwode. It is late in the day to begin again now, but for those who are interested in military planning and indeed in the whole problem of obtaining in any sphere of our national life an objective and adequate " appreciation " of a situation, Colonel Garsia's book will prove a highly suggestive introduction.

TOM PAINE

A GUEST AT LHASA

Land of a Thousand Buddhas. By THEOS BERNARD. *Rider.* 18*s.*

The Yoga System of Health. By YOGI VITHALDAS. *Faber.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

How is it that the description of a visit to Lhasa by special invitation of the Regent of Tibet, and of many pomps and ceremonies, including initiation into the " higher rites of Lamaism," consequent on the visitor being regarded as a reincarnation of the Tibetan " first-class Saint," Padma Sambhava, can give one the sense of immersion in a concentrated bath of American publicity? One does not, of course, question that Theos Bernard, M.A., B.A., LL.B., was actually in Lhasa; the two telegrams inviting him are reproduced, and his Elizabethan beard and smile and Tibetan robes figure in so many photographs—among his Tibetan girl-friends, with lamas in the garden of the Dalai Lama, paying a call, posing before an altar of 1,000 lights, photographing among a crowd of lamas—that it is hard to imagine Lhasa without him. But the mind is its own place, and the author's American mind so dominates the scene that one feels everything might almost as well have happened in a Hollywood reconstruction of Lhasa. Perhaps it was a necessary stage in the perfectioning of Padma Sambhava that he should discard all his former knowledge of Buddhism when he was reincarnated as " Theos Bernard of America "; for the author appears ignorant of the most elementary facts about the development of Buddhism and, after years of preparation for this culminating experience, is quite unconscious that the Kanjur and Tanjur (Tibetan version of the Indian Buddhist Scriptures), of which he so feverishly tried to secure a unique copy for the enlightenment of America, already exist in the Congress Library as well as in a few public libraries in Europe. Here is an example of the style of this " spiritual guinea-pig," as he calls himself; he has gone out unattended, and finds himself in a tight corner, with a few stones hurtling in his direction:

> Immediately I bethought myself of my aura, the aura which I had been coached to assume as a preliminary to my Lhasan pilgrimage, and now I assumed it. I straightened my shoulders, lifted my head high and directed my eyes straight ahead, and with the air of a great dignitary of the faith I advanced with a rapid, firm stride, trampling down anyone who did not stand aside. . . . The crowd opened before me, and in the effort to draw back some persons fell, and I without much ado merely walked over them.

And of a ride through Lhasa in the rain:

> I vow that God must have been watching me, for at one instant, while passing close to a house, out came a bucket of slops or something worse, and it missed me by scarcely half an inch. . . . On the whole we did not do so badly. We did brush aside one old man wobbling along on his stick, too lazy to move to a side when he heard us coming and saw everyone else scattering. Then again, in rounding one of the corners in a hurry, there was a girl who appeared deliberately to run to the middle of the narrow lane, where she paused to have a frontal view of us. She got an upward view as well, for we left her lying in a puddle of mud, looking up at the horses who were quickly passing over her.

Perhaps it was just the naive hustle of its American visitor which fascinated Lhasa, to whom he was a less familiar phenomenon than to us. And one must do him the justice of recording that his preference for the Tibetan over the Western scene appears to be as sincere as that of real Tibetan travellers: Mme. David-Neel and Marco Pallis. It is the least shallow thing in his book, and to one reader, at least, entirely sympathetic. The photographs also are excellent, though featuring too often Mr. Theos Bernard. But it is really tantalising that one can learn from him so little about the many dances and dramas which were performed during his stay. They seemed to him insufferably long; but even patience is not the only gift needed for a good description.

One day some fishermen of Benares drew out of the Ganges in their net a weed-covered, strange, dead fish. They laid it on the river bank, and gradually in the heat of the sun it began to show some feeble signs of life. At last in a complaining voice it revealed itself as a yogi who long ago had been washed from meditation into the river by a flood. His identity was established, his family would have welcomed back the truant; but he complained that his meditation had been untimely interrupted, and at his own wish was restored by the pious fishermen to the river bed. Probably very few of the readers of Yogi Vithaldas's little book will aim at becoming so magically powerful as to be an object of terror or worship to their neighbours; they will only want to extend their repertory of health-giving exercises. These are clearly explained and well illustrated, and one can guarantee that they are authentic. The author is, of course, well aware that he is presenting only a very etiolated form of Yoga to Western readers, for only in such a form would it be acceptable. Yoga separated from the religious beliefs which generated it is only the shell of a snail without the snail; so he presents the exercises in much the same terms as he might any mild aperient or health-giving tonic, and that Yoga was designed to produce a state of suspended consciousness and, at a further stage, release from the necessity of rebirth into this world of illusion, is not even hinted at. To justify Yoga by reasoned arguments is to talk into the wind; but one hopes that some readers may be interested enough by Yogi Vithaldas's exposition to put his book into practice, though, for psychological reasons rather than the actual difficulty of the exercises, this is very difficult without a teacher. Perhaps a very few may be incited to take a further step and join the select who are already sitting at the feet of a *guru* in Benares or Hollywood.

BERYL DE ZOETE

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

THE final works of all great artists have certain qualities in common which it would be interesting to discuss at length. Even at a brief glance, however, it is possible to note their main distinguishing marks, first among which I should place the forsaking of dramatic effects, of gesture and emphasis. Examples of this are Wagner's stated intention to abandon opera for the symphony—at least temporarily—after *Parsifal*; Verdi's *Falstaff*; Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, so much more " classical " than, for instance, the *Symphonie Fantastique*; Mahler's

The Family Physician

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A great many adjectives have been applied to headaches, 'Terrible'—'Dreadful'—'Awful'—'Splitting'—'Nagging'—and the pity of it is that in so many cases these strong words are fully justified. A headache can be prostrating. Sufferers should know how they can relieve a headache promptly and safely.

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Phensic is so good and reliable that surgeons are using it to soothe pain after operations—in preference to morphia.

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Ninth Symphony; the three late sonatas of Debussy which, almost alone of his works, have no programme at all. Wheels come full circle, if they are given time to revolve, and the inevitable lyricism of youth recurs at the end of a life, but in a starker, less ornate form: the April rapture of *Romeo and Juliet* darkens, becomes saturated with colour and elaborate with the complex interplay of experience and mature emotion, producing the terrible grandeur of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*; then the blood dies down, the eyes see more inwardly, the heart at last grasps the things of this world under the sign of eternity and—symbolical, wholly fantastic—*The Tempest* emerges, April come around again with only a shadow to show from which side the light is coming. *The Tempest* is almost music: *The Magic Flute*, its exact counterpart, is wholly so, for the quality of the emotions portrayed in the opera is entirely ideal. Both have a deceptive simplicity (another of our signs) resulting from perfect control over the medium and a complete digestion of all experiments made during a lifetime and incorporated at last into a firm yet malleable stuff capable of being turned to all accounts—all, that is to say, which suit the master's genius, for yet another sign of the late work is that absolute propriety of material and structure which proceeds from knowledge of individual limitations. And lastly—though this hardly applies to Mozart—I would point to a certain lack of superficial amenity, due as much to absence of desire to propitiate a public as to self-confidence and certainty of aim. Late works often have a take-it-or-leave-it air (e.g. Beethoven's last Quartets, Cézanne's *Château Noir*, Titian's final *Pietà*, Debussy's *Cello Sonata*); they are, so to speak, chucked at one: the artist, conscious of death's approach, can no longer be bothered to "make a nice parcel" of his goods.

All this *à propos* of Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto in A* (K.622), which has every characteristic I have mentioned save the last, for Mozart's artistic good manners remained with him to the end: he was incapable of ungraciousness or angularity. This profoundly lovely construction has none of the dramatic qualities of the great piano concertos; it is subdued and purely lyrical in feeling—in effect a piece of chamber music nearer to the *Clarinet Quintet* than to a symphony. This is happy, but very far from superficial, music; in it modulation is carried much farther than Mozart would have ventured in earlier days; the Adagio is a tranquil dream, and the final Rondo a miracle of complex gaiety. Reginald Kell plays the solo in an undertone, with absolute discretion and mastery of phrasing; the London Philharmonic, conducted by Malcolm Sargent, collaborates beautifully. This is a set in a hundred and should on no account be missed, for the work is all too seldom heard in the concert hall and the records are very moderate in price (H.M.V.).

It was a good idea to give listeners a taste of Karl Philipp Emmanuel Bach, the third son of Johann Sebastian. Though inferior in talent to his brother, Wilhelm Friedemann, he was not nobody, and the *Concerto for Orchestra in D* (arr. Steinberg) was certainly worth reviving. It is a fine example of the *concerto grosso*, especially in the slow movement. Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra probably gave of their best; but the recording (H.M.V.) is so unbearably harsh and shrill that few English instruments will be able to tackle it successfully. After those shrieking strings it is a relief to listen to the silken tones of Vaughan-Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis*, performed by a double string orchestra drawn from the B.B.C. ensemble and conducted by Sir Adrian Boult (H.M.V.). After some unfortunate sorties in the last few months, Sir Adrian is here once again in his element, and these records certainly surpass in depth and richness the already fine recording by Boyd Neel (Decca). The *Tallis Fantasia* is probably one of its composer's best works—a superb rose-window of stained glass aglow with colours of sombre magnificence.

Three overtures of widely differing style and intention recommend themselves to us this month. One is theatre music, two are for the concert hall. To begin with the former, the prelude to Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*. This opera is a latish work and contains some of Verdi's finest music, but it has never been very popular, chiefly owing to the gloomy confusion of the libretto. The prelude is a moving and wholly characteristic piece of music; the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, under Oswald Kabasta (H.M.V.), give an excellent performance only marred by some shrillness in the string department. Brahms' *Academic Festival Overture* belongs to a class which includes Weber's *Jubel-Ouverture*, the prelude to *Die Meistersinger* and Strauss's *Festliches Präludium*. In Brahms' case the somewhat pompous gaiety of the genre is mitigated, though I have never been able to think this one of the composer's most attractive works: the student-song melodies do not collaborate well in the polyphonic texture. The recording and the performance, by Weingartner and the London Symphony Orchestra (Col.), are in the alpha-plus category. So are those of Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blas* overture, by Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic (Col.). This charming work stands midway between Beethoven's *Egmont* and Schumann's *Manfred*; it has all its composer's virtues and almost none of his defects. To close the list of orchestral records, there is a curious movement by Rossini, entitled *Ciro in Babilonia*, described as a "Sinfonia" and well performed by the E.I.A.R. Symphony Orchestra (Parl.). This work is the overture to an oratorio produced at Ferrara about 1812. It was a failure, which is not surprising if the overture is an index of its quality, for it is exceedingly dull—mere note-spinning with no material to speak of.

Chamber music this month is represented by a number of piano records, some songs, and one string quartet. The latter is Mozart's in *D minor* (K.421), the first movement of which is one of his finest tragic conceptions; and though the Andante lowers the standard a little, the Minuet raises it again. The old Flonzaley recording of this quartet was a model of artistry, but is now quite out of date. The Blech quartet give a good, but unremarkable performance (Decca): the tone is rather wooden and the turnovers are clumsily managed; nor could I discover on what system the repeats in the Finale were made or rejected.

It is the test of a composer's invention to be obliged to express a great deal by the simplest of means. William Walton's new *Duets for Children* show how real is his talent (it may be something more), for these extremely transparent little pieces prove, on constant hearing, to be as tightly packed with music as an Elizabethan sonnet is with ideas and images. Though they must be very easy to play—an adult pair of hands could certainly encompass them—they are not in the least piffling; though the idiom on the whole recalls Bartok, some of the numbers (e.g. 2, and the middle section of 10) have a Schubertian poetry that pursues one throughout the day—a very welcome trick just now. This enchanting opuscule is very tactfully played by Ilona Kabos and Louis Kentner (Col.). I did not, on the other hand, care for the duet version of the *Popular Song* from *Façade*, on side 4: the cocky rhythm and straw-boater humour of this piece is spoilt by elaboration of parts and unnecessary ornament.

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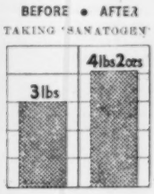

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Eileen Joyce is not at her best this month; she fails to throw new light on Chopin's notorious *Nocturne in E flat*, op. 9, and her rendering of the *Nocturne in B*, op. 32 (Parl.), though graceful enough, is not the equal of Rubinstein's. Nothing but perfection will do, in cases like these. Far better is a 10-inch disc, by Cortot, of the Chopin-Liszt *Chants Polonais* ("Spring" and "The Ring") (H.M.V.). These miniature songs go well as piano pieces and one could scarcely hope to hear them better played. The same cannot be said of Strauss's *Ständchen*, arranged and played by Gieseking (Col.). This is a most otiose affair, impossibly clumsy; the attempt should never have been made, for this melody loses all meaning if it is not sung by a human voice. A rather dull early piece by Debussy, *Rêverie*, on the obverse, does little towards making this record worth buying.

Lotte Lehmann is, of course, one of the few great singers of our miserable day; but I doubt if she has ever given us a more exquisite record than this, of Wolf's *Peregrina No.* 1 and *Auch kleine Dinge* (H.M.V.). The first of these is from the Mörike Lieder, which are, I think, perhaps Wolf's most romantic songs. *Peregrina* is violently emotional, but of thrilling beauty. *Auch kleine Dinge* hardly needs recommendation, but, though Mme. Lehmann sings it with the greatest delicacy, Elena Gerhardt's remains the classic rendering. One never quite forgets that Mme. Lehmann is primarily an opera singer, and in her singing of Lieder, ravishing though it is in tone and phrasing, she is apt to press too heavily on climaxes and flood the whole song with more emotion than it is intended to carry.

Gigli inflicts upon us *Amor ti vieta* from Giordano's *Fedora*, and *Lolita*, described as a Serenata Espagnola (H.M.V.). Those who like this kind of thing will not want to read my comments on it. In any case, about some kinds of music the less said the better. The recording is up to standard.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 541

Set by Roderick Random

The suspension of horse racing and greyhound racing has just been announced. A first prize of two guineas and a second of half a guinea are offered for the best paragraph (not exceeding 300 words) of comment on this subject from any one of the following: J. L. Garvin, Timothy Shy, Peter Howard, Patience Strong, Lord Castlerosse, Maurice Healey, the *Times* Leader Writer, *The Week*, William Hickey.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday. June 28th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 539

Set by L. V. Upward

The discussion between Alice and the Red Queen about the dog, the bone and the lost temper is left in an unsatisfactory state. The Queen has no retort for Alice's mild objection that dog and temper might go different ways.

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Rates and all information on page 782

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This omission should be made good. The usual prizes are offered for a conversation in which the Red Queen (helped or hindered by a few suggestions from the White Queen, if desired), demolishing all Alice's arguments, proves to the hilt that "the dog's temper would remain." The debate is limited to 250 words.

Report by L. V. Upward

It was perhaps an unfortunate moment at which to set such a light-hearted competition, or was it? At all events the entries were few and not of a very high standard. What was wanted was a continuation of the argument broken off so abruptly because of the Red Queen's apparent inability to challenge Alice's objection; but a number of competitors ended where they should have begun, and one so far forgot himself as to turn the whole affair into a political allegory—may heaven forgive him! Only seven entrants started in the right place and stuck, more or less, to the right lines throughout. H. S. Jaffray failed because he kept Alice far too quiet and over-used the White Queen. J. C. B. Date maintained the true Looking-Glass style well, but his arguments were not quite ingenious enough. H. T. S. would have done better, I think, to have refrained from reference to a certain brand of distemper actually on the market. Apart from the fact that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION might well object to giving away a free advertisement in the Competition column, such a reference has a distinctly un-Carrollean aspect. Charles Furbank began well, but ended weakly. His Red Queen tries to clinch the argument by saying that the temper remained to eat the bone, apparently forgetting that the bone had already been removed. Most unlike the Red Queen, that!

To decide between the respective merits of G. F. Plant and E. W. Fordham I had a long and grim struggle. Both were good; their arguments were ingenious, and they managed to give their work the real Looking-Glass atmosphere. After many readings I came to the conclusion that Mr. Fordham had kept just a little closer to the original style, and so I recommend him for the second prize, though I discard Mr. Plant's entry with a good deal of reluctance, especially as he was one of the very few who seemed to remember that the discussion was actually part of a mathematical examination set by the two queens to test Alice's fitness for queenship. About the first prize-winner I was never in any doubt. Ellen Evans obviously knows her "Alice" thoroughly, and knows, moreover, how to imitate Lewis Carroll's clever nonsense—a far harder task than many people seem to think—very well indeed; her ingenuity, too, leaves nothing to be desired. I have no hesitation in recommending Miss Evans for the first prize.

FIRST PRIZE

Alice said, as gravely as she could, "They might go different ways."

"Don't mumble, child!" said the Red Queen. "Of course, a dog and his temper don't weigh the same."

"I didn't know that tempers could be weighed," said Alice, with some interest.

"Oh, yes, yes!" sighed the White Queen. "I weigh them myself, on Saturday mornings. The heavy ones are put away in boxes and the dry ones are always wrapped in silver paper."

The Red Queen patted her shoulder. "Keep calm at all costs," she whispered.

"That's just it," said the White Queen dismally. "The silver paper costs so much. Only yesterday I paid fourpence for two-shillingsworth."

"But how do you set about weighing tempers?" persisted Alice.

"I suppose that you've seen an anchor weighed?" remarked the Red Queen.

"That's altogether different," Alice said, with conviction. "To begin with, anchors are made of iron."

"And all iron has a temper," said the Red Queen.

"Indeed it has," agreed the White Queen. "My iron is always burning me. Nothing but temper, I assure you."

Alice tried to bring her thoughts into order. "Even if tempers could be weighed, a dog's would weigh nothing, I imagine."

"You may imagine what you please," said the Red Queen.

"So nothing would remain after all," Alice concluded, with great satisfaction.

"And what exactly do you mean by 'remain'?" snapped the Red Queen.

"Be left."

"Then if nothing were left, everything would be right, and that is impossible, because it's never right to lose your temper."

"Try her with Muldiflication," said the White Queen timidly. ELLEN EVANS

SECOND PRIZE

"'They might go different ways,'" echoed the Red Queen contemptuously. "How *could* they go? Tempers can't walk or run."

"Or fly or swim," put in the White Queen.

"So they must stay where they are," said the Red Queen.

"But," said Alice thoughtfully, "people fly into tempers sometimes."

"That just proves that tempers don't fly into people, and *that* proves they can't fly at all, and if they can't fly they must remain."

"I don't see that," said Alice.

"Well, they haven't got legs, have they?"

"Or fins," added the White Queen.

Alice felt she was getting the worst of it, but suddenly she had a good idea, and said triumphantly, "Neither have snakes, and they don't always stay where they are."

"Their tempers do," said both Queens together.

"A snake might go away in a temper," Alice answered.

"Nonsense; even if you are a snake you can't be in a temper unless you have lost it, and if you've lost it you can't go away in it."

"Just like a train," said the White Queen.

"I see," said Alice doubtfully.

"Well, a dog's temper is no cleverer than a snake's, is it?"

"I should hardly think so," Alice said.

"Very well then, the dog's temper, just like the snake's, would remain; and that's what I said at the beginning."

"How clever she is," said the White Queen.

E. W. FORDHAM

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By CYNICUS

THE STOCK EXCHANGE FUTURE—THE HOME RAILWAY SLUMP—THE DUTY OF INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS

Now that we can no longer regard the Stock Exchange as a market—for dealings generally have become a matter of negotiation and in American stocks and in bearer securities have been entirely suspended " by order,"—we must change our views of the essential purposes of this peculiar City institution. In short, the Stock Exchange must be mobilised for war. I am not in favour of closing its doors and sending all its members and their clerks to join the forces or " to dig for victory." Certainly, Stock Exchange firms should now amalgamate to economise man power and the Stock Exchange Committee should immediately set up its Central Clearing Scheme to release male and female clerks for more vital work of national importance. But with their staffs reduced Stock Exchange firms should remain open, should continue to advise the harassed owners of securities, especially the distressed wives or widows, and divert the flow of private money as far as possible into Government Loans. But the security markets themselves should be brought further under control by the extension of the system of minimum prices. I have been an opponent of the minimum price system on the grounds that it was a pretence, that it reduced markets to complete unmarketability and investors to virtual illiquidity. But now that markets have become more or less frozen in their natural course, the marketability argument no longer applies. Indeed, to allow security prices in every market where no minimum prices are established to fall day after day without any real business taking place is the height of financial folly, for it merely diminishes the Treasury collections under the Stamp and Estate Duties. How many millions have already been lost to the Treasury by allowing Stamp Duties on transfers and valuations of deceased estates for death duties to be calculated on the basis of unreal, knock-out prices on the Stock Exchange? This absurdity must stop.

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Let us take again the case of the home railway market in which so many deceased accounts find their burial ground. First charge debenture stocks of the main line companies have fallen to a 5¼ per cent. yield basis, although they are first-class securities covered not only by earnings but by a Government guarantee as well for the war period. If the yields on such stocks are allowed to remain on a 5¼ per cent. basis it will be impossible for the Government indefinitely to maintain their medium-term issues on a 3 per cent. or their long-term issues on a 3½ per cent. basis. The junior railway stocks have fallen to a more fantastic basis as the following table reveals :

	Price May 3rd	Present Price	Divd.*	Divd. Yield %
L.M.S. 1st Pref. ...	65	40½	4%	£9 17 6
L.M.S. 1923 Pref....	54	26	4%	15 7 6
L.M.S. Ordinary ...	21½	11¼	1%	8 14 0
L.N.E.R. 1st Pref.	52	22	4%	19 1 0
L.N.E.R. 2nd Pref.	19½	7	1.2%	17 2 3
Southern Pref. Ord.	71¼	40	5%	12 10 0
Southern Defd. Ord.	20½	8	0.8%	10 0 0
Gt. Western Ord. ...	45½	26	3.3%	12 14 0

* Guaranteed under the Government war agreement.

The yields shown in this table indicate not only forced selling from deceased accounts on an unwilling market but stubborn unwillingness to buy on the part of institutional investors.

I suspect that the institutional investors are suffering under some illusion that they must keep their powder dry for the next issue of War Loan, which cannot be much longer delayed. All new income accruing to Insurance Companies must at the request of the Treasury be reserved for investment in Government loans, but this is not intended to prevent the employment of idle cash balances on the Stock Exchange in the purchase of depreciated securities. As there is really no borrower to-day except the Government—new commercial issues and export of capital being prohibited—money can only trickle back finally into the Treasury chest, however much it is turned over and diverted on the way. Let us suppose that an institutional investor buys £50,000 worth of home railway prior charges at the bargain prices ruling to-day. The seller of these stocks may be the executors of a deceased estate who will be handing the cash over to the Government in estate duties. Or the seller may be some hard-up individual wanting cash for current consumption, but when he satisfies his wants the seller of the consumption goods will have an extra cash balance which will flow back to the banks and from the banks to the Government. Assuming always that our national output of goods is property mobilised, there is no escaping the fact that idle cash, however it is employed, will flow back to the Government. The Treasury should therefore immediately instruct institutional investors to make as much use as possible of idle balances in preventing a catastrophic slump in security values on the Stock Exchange, which does no good to anyone and only harms the Treasury revenues. To give the institutional investor a lead, I suggest that the Treasury should immediately extend the system of minimum prices to the home railway market and to a few pivotal equity stocks.

Company Meeting

VENEZUELAN OIL CONCESSIONS

SIR ANDREW AGNEW'S ADDRESS

THE Twenty-fourth Ordinary Annual General Meeting of the Venezuelan Oil Concessions, Ltd., was held on Tuesday, in London.

Sir Andrew Agnew, C.B.E. (the chairman) presided, and said (in part): Shareholders will be aware from our experience during the past several years that exchange rates have a considerable influence on the results of our operations. In the case of 1939, although this influence was stronger than ever before, the two tendencies which were operative were to some extent of a compensating nature.

On the revenue side we benefit in terms of dollar exchange. On the other hand, our bolivar expenditure has for a number of years been heavily burdened by the maintenance of the bolivar on the gold standard, and this was further weighted against us by the world happenings in the last four months of the year. On this account our sterling expenditure was somewhat higher than in 1938, in spite of the fact that our actual expenditure in bolivares showed a considerable reduction as the result of further economies in operations. Oil proceeds and value of oil stocks have increased from £6,450,000 to £7,080,000. This improvement, namely, some £630,000, can be attributed almost entirely to the more favourable dollar-sterling exchange rate. On the expenditure side of the account the first two items, comprising the sterling required to finance our expenditure in Venezuela, amount to £4,131,733 as against £4,051,086 in 1938, an increase of some £80,000, or 2 per cent.

A summarised comparison of our 1939 profit and loss account with that of the previous year is provided by the fact that the increase of £630,000 in our revenue is almost exactly offset by additional expenditure in the fields and for extra taxes. There remains the increase of £200,000 in the year's allowance for depreciation. Against this it has not been considered necessary to make any provision for 1939 to exploration and general reserve, compared with £250,000 set aside last year, thus also enabling us to increase the profit by £50,000, which is available to increase the carry-forward. Our cash position at the end of 1939 was a strong one, with cash on deposit and current accounts and in hand totalling £953,000, and after allowing for net requirements, our position to-day is adequate.

As regards current operations in our fields, our expenditure is being confined to what is strictly necessary for the production and delivery of crude oil and the maintenance of essential requirements and commitments.

For the purpose of doing our utmost to avoid the use of foreign currency, every endeavour is being made, in close co-operation with the Petroleum Ministry and the Ministry of Supply, to purchase the maximum proportion of our requirements of materials and equipment in the United Kingdom. Under normal conditions a large proportion of our needs is obtained from the United States. This applies particularly to drilling and production equipment and machinery, which is produced in the United States on a far larger scale than in this country. Since the war, however, we have been in contact with manufacturers and suppliers on this side, and in a large number of cases have been able to co-operate in enabling them to commence the manufacture of articles which they did not previously produce. Naturally under war conditions there is always a possibility that manufacturing capacity engaged in the production of other than direct war materials may have to be diverted to such purposes at short notice. In cases where this has occurred, or may in future occur, we are in a position to adapt ourselves immediately to the altered circumstances.

Our drilling programme now comprises 8 strings of tools, all of which are employed in the Bolivar District. The string which was previously operating in the Concepcion field in the Maracaibo District, has recently been transferred to the Bolivar District, where it can be employed to better advantage.

Our policy of electrifying our principal fields is being extended to Cabimas, since although this field has passed its peak as a source of production, it has, we consider, sufficient useful life still before it to reap the benefits of economy and flexibility made possible by the use of electric prime movers in the pumping of wells, the gathering of oil and other similar phases of our operations.

The coastal dyke to counteract the effect of subsidence at Lagunillas, to which reference was made in the report, has now been completed in the central part of the Lake shore frontage, and should give adequate protection for a considerable number of years. Additional work to maintain the existing flood protection and drainage schemes is being carried out as necessary in other parts of the field.

Our exploration and general reserve as at the end of 1938 stood at £1,000,000, while our contribution to V.O.D. expenditure as at the end of 1939 amounted to £550,000. For this reason it has not been considered necessary to set aside any further sum to exploration and general reserve in respect of last year. Nevertheless, as explained in previous years, it must be appreciated that this reserve, besides providing for our interest in V.O.D., is intended to contribute to writing off the value of our wasting assets and other intangibles. Your directors will have the question of the exploration and general reserve constantly before them.

The report and accounts with the recommendation of a final dividend of 1s. 7d., making 2s. 3d. per share for the year, were unanimously adopted.

PURELY PERSONAL

MARK TWAIN limited his smoking to one cigar at a time. If the motive was economy he obviously cannot have known of King Six Cigars at 7½d. each.